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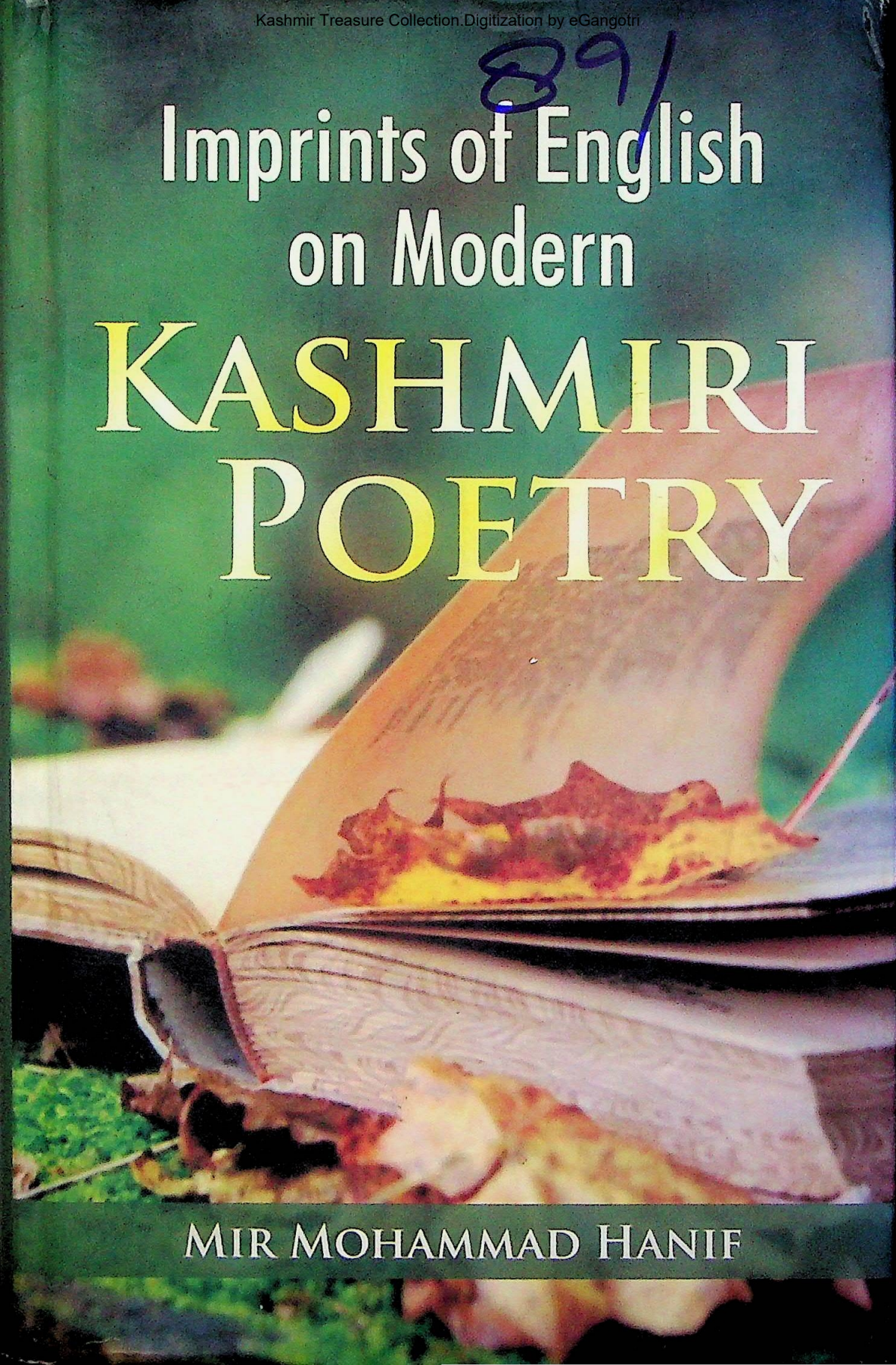

MIR MOHAMMAD HANIF

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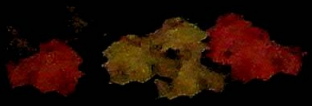
This book traces the origin of Kashmiri Language and Literature in general and Modern Kashmiri Poetry in particular with Mahjoor & Azad as pioneers. They were later joined by a galaxy of poets like Nadim, Rahman Rahi, Kamil, Firaq, Shafi Shauq and others who displayed their creative potential and made this newly established poetic tradition more firm for hundreds of years.

The book mainly focuses on the influence of English literature on some of the major contemporary Kashmiri poets with special reference to Dinanath Nadim, Rahman Rahi and Shafi Shauq, both in terms of theme and style, so as to establish the distinctiveness of their contribution to the growth and development of modern Kashmiri poetry.



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About the author

Dr. Mir Mohammad Hanif born in South Kashmir (Anantnag) District obtained Bachelor's Degree from Govt. Degree College, Anantnag and Master's Degree from Department of English, University of Kashmir. He was awarded PH D degree by Andhra University, Vizag. Presently, he is working as Associate professor in the Department of English, Islamia College of Science & Commerce (college with potential for excellence and Autonomous) Srinagar. He has presented research papers in State & National level seminars and participated in various workshops and conferences. His area of interest is poetry.

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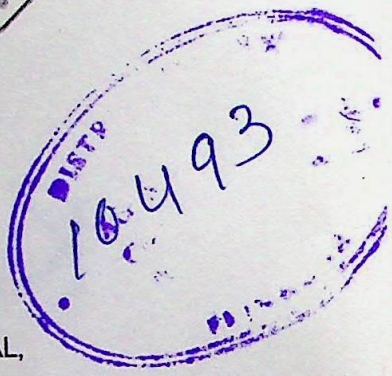

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MIR MOHAMMAD HANIF

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Preface

It is a recognized reality that Kashmiri poetry, from the medieval times to the beginning of the twentieth century, was 'spiritual' in nature, dealing primarily with the spiritual aspects of man & his relation with the God. It was what J.C.Ransom called (in "Poetry: A Note on Ontology") a 'Platonic poetry' full of abstract ideas, concepts & theories. This poetry gave a secondary place to the ordinary and worldly side of nature & man.

Although the strong poetic accomplishment projected through tangible imagery, the poetry of Lal Ded, and Shaikul Aalam is escapist in nature & has barely any craving for worldly charms. No doubt, the longstanding socio-economic and cultural settings promoted this variety of poetic sensibility but its undimensional approach still remains one of its chief limitations. Since the fate of the Kashmiri's during the said phase was mostly dependent upon the whims & will-fulness of their foreign rulers which in turn fashioned their collective consciousness – a consciousness which is more tending to the metaphysical notions – the reader comes across a spiritualist strain in the poetry believing that man can sway his destiny through hard work and conviction in the Divine power.

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However, in the twentieth century which 'liberated' man from various traditional approaches & outlooks, Kashmiri poetry out stepped the traditional style & came closer to the terrestrial features of life, the newly developed poetic idioms & predilections with all their creative force. Mahjoor & Azad, who are known as the trend-setters of modern Kashmiri poetry made poetry a tool of expression of their warm feelings. Mahjoor, who was largely a conformist, did introduce new themes like earthly love & other secular subjects in his poems, though the main persona of his poems remained the same age-old, love-sick woman as was in the medieval Kashmiri poetry. Azad, as compared to Mahjoor, composed different types of poems which are full of new zeal & fervour, displaying Azad's faith in human values like Humanism & International Brotherhood. His poems, 'The River', 'The Waterfall', & 'The Stars' are considered among the greatest poems of not only Azad himself but of all Kashmiri poetry. After Mahjoor & Azad, a galaxy of poets capable of displaying imaginative warmth and creative potential made this newly established poetic tradition more stable. Poets like Nadim, Rahman Rahi, Kamil, Firaq, & others helped Kashmiri poetry for hundreds of years. Initially most of these poets believed in idealism but as they outgrew their idealistic limits, they portrayed a different picture of man & his predicament. Most of these poets were familiar with the developments in the West & had developed a great craze for the Progressive Movement, influenced by the Russian Revolution of 1917.

No doubt these so-called progressive poets of Kashmiri language soon got disillusioned, as were their counterparts in the sub continent, with Communism, yet they gave a new direction to Kashmiri poetry, both in theme & style. In their own poetry they focused on the socio-economic aspects of the contemporary society rather than on mysticism or transcendentalism; & introduced for the first time such poetic forms as haiku, short poem, blank / free verse, sonnet, dramatic monologue, etc. Some of them had received western education whereas a few of them taught English literature

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at undergraduate & post-graduate levels, though all of them were familiar with the influence of English literature on Hindi & Urdu literatures.

The present book is an attempt to trace the influence of English literature on some of the major contemporary Kashmiri poets, both in terms of theme & style, in order to establish the distinctiveness of their contribution to the growth & development of Kashmiri poetry. The study has been divided into five chapters followed by a conclusion.

Chapter I, entitled "Kashmir, Kashmiris and the Literary Tradition" deals with the introduction to the land & people of Kashmir, its language & the culture. Besides, in this chapter, it has been shown how Kashmiri literature despite having rich native traditions got influenced by the literature of other communities which at various occasions came into contact with Kashmiri people as the valley had been ruled by many peoples like the Greeks, the Turks, the Afghanis, the English & the Dogras for over six hundred years. As a result due to diversity, Kashmiri culture represents the unique picture of the Himalayan valley. All this diversity in unity is reflected in the works of the Shaivite & Sufi writers of Kashmir. During the long period of over six hundred years, Kashmir produced many romantic poets as well who wrote on man's earthly love and beauty of nature. In fact, the tradition of mystic and romantic poetry ran parallel in Kashmiri literature which is hard to distinguish, and only a few poems have been analyzed as examples. Moreover, the study has also tried to show how by the beginning of the twentieth century, Mahjoor and Azad deviated from our traditional mystic and romantic poetry, and started writing on the themes of realism and revolution. Therefore they are as such considered to be the real founders of modern Kashmiri poetry.

Chapter II tries to give a historical overview of how English language of the English came to Kashmir, and how various English scholars worked in collaboration with the Kashmiri scholars in or-

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der to study various aspects of Kashmiri language and literature. This contact gave birth to new genres of literature in Kashmiri like the short poem, the sonnet, the novel, the opera and the short story. However, while accepting and assimilating the influence of foreign literatures, particularly English, Kashmiri writers were conscious of keeping alive their native genres of literature.

In chapter III; it has been shown how Dinanath Nadim emerged as the most celebrated Imagist poet in Kashmiri. After giving a brief overview of his life, there is a discussion of the sailent features of his poetry with special reference to Imagism in some of his most famous poems. This analysis has been given to highlight how Nadim, while retaining his organic relation with the native poetic values, enriched Kashmiri poetry through Imagism of the West. His influence was not only on his contemporaries but also to a large extent on his followers.

Chapter IV deals with Rahman Rahi as the most outstanding Symbolist poet in Kashmiri despite his close relations with the mystic and romantic poets of Kashmir. To prove our point, a thorough analysis of his various poems has been done.

In chapter V, it has been shown how Shafi Shauq emerged as a representative of contemporary Kashmiri poetry as he first got influenced by Modernism and then by Postmodernism since both these Movements had their considerable influence on contemporary Kashmiri poetry. Unlike his contemporaries like Nadim and Rahi, Shauq turned out to be a different kind of poet besides, being a reputed critic as well. In this chapter, a thorough analysis of his poems is given which are written on a variety of themes.

At the end, there is a conclusion, which sums up the main arguments and discussions of this piece of work, bringing out the influence of English on Kashmiri poets and in turn the contribution of three great poets of Kashmir to the development of modern Kashmiri poetry.

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This book is basically the result of the author's five years of research. The material owes its existence to many discussions which he had with his teacher Prof. (Dr.) Shafi Shauq.

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Acknowledgment

In writing this book, I have been helped by many individuals and institutions. First of all, I am highly thankful to Allah, the Almighty, who has given me strength and courage to pursue this piece of research work. Next my gratitude must go to my supervisor for her able supervision, help and to my co-guide Prof. (Dr.) Shafi Shauq without whose guidance this research was never possible.

Acknowledgment is due to the library and staff of Sahitya Academy, New Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, Iqbal Library, Kashmir University, Department of Kashmiri and Department of English, Kashmir University for providing me primary and secondary material.

My thanks are due to my teachers and friends who always helped me throughout my research.

Lastly, no thank can make me free from indebtedness of my parents and wife whose support has made possible for me to carry out my research.

Mir Mohammad Hanif

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Chapter — I

Kashmir, Kashmiris and the Literary Tradition

The valley of Kashmir, the marvel of nature in the Himalayas, is said to be the crown of Bharat. The valley is named Kashmir as, according to the legend, it was a great saint called Kashyapa Rishi who made the valley inhabitable. It is said that there existed a prehistoric lake known as Sati Sar in the Himalayas. The miraculous power of Kashap Rishi caused a huge chasm in the northern mountains wherefrom the water of the lake drained out. Various nomadic tribes belonging to various ethnicities came and peopled the fertile valley. In the vernacular Kashmir is called "Kasheer".

Kashmir, a valley with wavy boundary, has an average length of 128 kms from north-west to south-east, and 50 kms wide. The total area of the main valley is 3,900 square kms. There are many smaller valleys adjoining its south, south-east and the north-west. (Drew 124 -125)

The total number of the speakers of Kashmiri language is about ten million who live in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and outside the state. In 2001-Census Report, the number of Kashmiri speaking people living in Kashmir valley was shown as 53,15,096 out of the total population of the state of Jammu and Kashmir that is 101.44 lacs.

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Kashmiri is a living language and as such, the language has different dialects spoken in various regions of the valley and the surrounding valleys. The linguists have identified three major regional dialects of the language, namely, *Maraazi* (spoken in the southern part of Kashmir, called *Maraaz*), *Kamraazi*, spoken in the northern part of the valley, called *Kamraaz)*, Srinagar dialect recognized as the standard dialect for literature. Besides these major dialects, *Kishtawari*, spoken in Kishtwar valley, and *Pogli*, spoken in the valley of Pogul Paristan in the Jammu province are also two important regional dialects of the language. There are many dialectal variations according to the religious and the occupational segments of the society.

The dialectal variations, however, do not make the dialects mutually unintelligible. The speakers of one dialect can easily change their dialect in conversation. There is a considerable population of Kashmir belonging to other ethnic groups, like Sikhs, Gojars and Bakarwals, who not only understand the language, but also speak it as their second language. The Kashmiris call their language *Kaeshur*, not Kashmiri.

The origin of the language is still a controversial issue and more than one theories are available that need consideration. It is however, an historical fact that the language existed long before Ashoka's conquest of the region in the third century CE. There are three major points of view about its origin.

The first opinion is that the Kashmiri language has remained under the influence of the Indo-Aryan languages, particularly Sanskrit, for more than two millennia. The cultural contact with the people speaking Sanskrit and its Prakrits started when Ashoka annexed the Valley to his empire in the third century BCE. Buddhism became the major religion of the Valley and Kashmir became one of the major centres of Buddhism that developed close contacts with Gandhara and Texela civilizations, two distinct civilizations

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in the north-west. A large number of Buddhist monks migrated to Kashmir and from Kashmir they propagated their faith to China and various Central Asian countries. It is said in the chronicles that the fourth international Buddhist conference was held in Kashmir. Buddhist civilization reached its climax in the ninth century CE. When the world-famous monk Hieun Tsiang came from China to Kashmir, he was simply astounded to see the Buddhist Vihars spread in every nook and corner of the Valley. It was in that era that there existed a large Buddhist cultural centre at Harwan, the birth place of the great Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna who is famous throughout the Buddhist world. The great conquerors Lalitadatiya, Gopadatiya and Awanti Varmana are some of the Buddhist kings who ruled the entire north India and many parts of the Central Asia from Kashmir. The ruins at Parihaspora, Martand, Naran Nang, Payar and Awantipora stand as testimony of that golden age of Kashmiri culture.

Buddhism showed signs of decline in the seventh and eighth centuries and was completely replaced by Kashmiri Shaivism. It was during the reign of Avantivarmana in the eighth century that a large number of Hindu saints, philosophers and Shaivite thinkers made Avantivarmana's court their meeting place. The king bestowed every manner of favour and comfort on them and encouraged them to pursue their scholarly work. All the Sanskrit literary historians are of the consensus that more than eighty percent of the total Sanskrit literature was produced by Kashmiris in the times from the eighth century to the fourteenth century CE. Great scholars in the fields of philosophy, grammar, aesthetic, rhetoric, medicine, and other fields belonged to Kashmir. Some of these great world-renowned scholars are Vasogupta, Anandavardhana, Mamata, Bhaskara, Bharata, Abhinavagupta, Somanan-da, Ratnakara, Utpala, Somadeva and Kalhana.

Since Kashmir became the stronghold of Sanskrit literature, philosophy and learning, it was quite natural that the local popula-

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tion could not remain uninfluenced. Kashmiri Shaivism became the major religion of the Valley. It was because of this that the Kashmiri language, whatever basis it had, borrowed heavily from Sanskrit and it is a fact that more than ninety percent of Kashmiri vocabulary, before the influence of Persian, has been borrowed from Sanskrit. Brahmins from the Indian peninsula came to Kashmir in search of food and protection. In some old Sanskrit texts, there is a much quoted line:

> Kasmiran yasyaamah talaoodanam bakhshyam
>
> (Tr. Oh could we reach Kashmir where we could find food in plenty.)

(Bamzai 13)

The borrowings from Sanskrit at the level of vocabulary were so preponderant that the language appeared to be a Prakrit like other Prakrits of the subcontinent.

G.Buhler, who, in search of Sanskrit manuscripts, visited Kashmir in 1875, was one of the first European scholars to note the affinity of Kashmiri with other Prakrits. He wrote: "Kashmiri is a Prakrit, one of the languages descended from Sanskrit, or rather from one of the dialects out of which classical Sanskrit was formed." (79)

However, it was G.Buhler again who for the first time observed the sharp difference between Kashmiri and other Prakrits. He wrote:

> It differs, however, very considerably from its entire Indian sister tongues. Nearest to it comes Sindhi, but the differences from Sindhi and Kashmiri are greater than those between Sindhi and Gujrati and Hindi. (80)

The second opinion about the origin of the language is put forward by George Abraham Grierson. After studying thoroughly the unique phonological, morphological and syntactic features of the Kashmiri language, George Abraham Grierson, in his *Linguistic Survey of India*, placed the language as a language of the Dardic group, the third branch of the Indic stock of the Indo-European

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family; the other two being the Indo-Aryan and the Iranian. By the term Dardic he meant all those languages that occur in the sparsely populated mountainous region, called Dardistan, which lies to the north-west of India. The term Dardistan, coined by Leitner in 1866 (7), is ethno-geographic in connotation, rather than linguistic. George A.Grierson, relied mainly on the information provided to him by G.W.Leitner and Frederick Drew to decide the genealogical classification of the Dardic languages, also called Pishachi languages. He wrote in *Linguistic Survey of India* (Vol.8.Part 2):

> ...The Pishacha languages, which include the Shina-Khowaar group, occupy a position intermediate between the Sanskritic languages of India proper and Iranian languages farther to their west. They thus possess many features that are common to them and the Sanskritic languages. But they also possess features peculiar to themselves, and others in which they agree rather with languages of the Iranian family.... That language (Kashmiri) possesses nearly all the features that are peculiar to the Pishacha and also those in which Pishacha agrees with Eranian. (1919: 2)

Grierson, however, doubted the classification of Kashmiri as an Indo-Aryan language. He was the first philologist who questioned his own postulate regarding this classification. He wrote:

> ...the claim locally urged that it is essentially a Sanskritic language persists, and in view of the historical fact that the Valley of Kashmir, before its conversion to Islam, was wholly populated by Brahmins with their Sanskritic lore, that claim might merit reconsideration. (345)

About the language group, Grierson believed that the Dardic languages are:

> ...neither of Indian nor of Eranian origin, but a third branch of the Aryan stock, which separated from the parent stem after the branching forth of the original of the Indian languages, but before the Eranian languages had developed all their peculiar characteristics. (416)

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After Grierson's notion of the Dardic, the term gained universal recognition and Kashmiri remained placed under the group.

All the Dardic languages share almost everything with the rest of the Indo-Aryan languages. Some linguists like Morgenstierne believe that they are not a separate group, but like other Prakrits the offshoot of the Indo-Aryan. Morgenstierne, after his extensive research in the so called Dardic languages, concluded that all the languages spoken in the area were a cluster of freak Indo-Aryan languages, not a separate third branch of the Indic stem. He wrote that the languages

> ...contain absolutely no feature which cannot be derived from old IA. They have simply retained a number of striking archaisms, which had already disappeared in most Prakrit dialects....There is not a single common feature distinguishing Dardic as a whole, from the rest of the IA languages, and the Dardic area itself is intersected by a network of isoglosses, often of historical interest as indicating ancient lines of communication as well as barriers. (138)

Morgenstierne, while rejecting Grierson's tripartite division of the Indic stem, did not take into consideration the non-Indo-Aryan features of the Kashmiri language and tagged the language with the mere geographical group of the Indo-Aryan languages, called Dardic. Gerard Fussman, who also used the term, however argued that "...the name Dardic languages ought not to be applied to Kashmiri." (11)

Suniti Kumar Chaterji, Braj B. Kachroo, Ruthe Laila Schimdt, Peter Edwin Hook, Omkar N. Koul, Kashi Wali, R.K. Bhatt and some other linguists continue to fortify the modified view that Dardic languages are essentially Indo-Aryan languages like other Prakrits, and Kashmiri, in spite of its unique phonology, morphology and syntax is a Dardic language. Boris Zakharyin, who discussed the distinctive features of the Kashmiri language, eloquently favoured the opinion

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of classifying Kashmiri as an Indo-Aryan language. He wrote:

> ...the more we learn about the Dardic languages...the more evident it becomes that G. A. Grierson might have been wrong to separate Kashmiri from the Indo-Aryan language stock, and that perhaps J. Block (1934) was right in stating that Kashmiri only primordially had been Dardic and later underwent a very heavy Indo-Aryanization.
>
> (Kaul and Hook 43)

The third opinion about the origin of the language is that Kashmiri is an ancient, independent Indo-European Language, neither a Prakrit nor a Dardic language. About the unique phonological and structural features of the language Shafi Shauq proposes:

> Keeping in view the radical differences between Kashmir and the IA languages, and also the fact that the very concept of the separate group of Dardic languages is baseless, it is safe to conclude that the Kashmiri language is an ancient Aryan language having closer affinity with Balto-Slavic and the Germanic languages rather than with Sanskrit and other IA languages. It has descended from some unknown dialect of the Central Asian Aryans, nicknamed as the Pishachas, who peopled the valley much before the advent of the Hindus. The language has continuously changed its lexis under the influence of the languages of the dominant peoples: Greeks, Buddhists, Brahmins, Iranis, Afghans, Chaks, Mughals, Sikhs, Dogras and English, who successively ruled Kashmir. Lexis, being always replaceable, cannot be accepted as the basis of genealogical classification of the language; phonology, morphology and syntax of the language intimate primitive ethnic identity of the people and existence of a proto-Kashmiri that borrowed from the languages of all those peoples that came into immediate cultural contact with the people of the Valley. (217)

All the three opinions about the origin of the language merit consideration and further research. Nothing can be said for certain

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unless the language is compared with other Central Asian languages prevailing in the north-west of the valley of Kashmir and some languages of the East Europe, particularly the Slovak languages.

Kashmiri is a unique language of the subcontinent. Its phonological, morphological, and syntactic structures are altogether different from the rest of the Indo-Aryan languages. Here is a summary of some of its distinctive traits:

1. Occurrence of central vowels
2. Occurrence of mid-front short vowel
3. Occurrence of mid-back short
4. Heavy palatalisation
5. Occurrence of back-low short diphthong
6. Absence of voiced aspirated stops, i.e., */bh/, /dh/, /Dh/, /jh/, /gh/*
7. Presence of unvoiced dental fricatives, i.e. */ts/* and */tsh/*
8. In Kashmiri several morphemes get welded together in one word. The word *dopmas*, for instance, means: "I told (past) it (masculine, singular) to her (feminine, singular). All the morphs have merged together to make it different from such words as: *depmas, dopnay, dopmakh, dapakh, dapnay, dapan, dapakh...* etc.
9. Unlike the Indo-Aryan languages, Kashmiri exhibits a tripartite system of demonstrative pronouns: *yi* (this), *hu* (that within sight) and *su/ti* (that invisible). All these forms take inflections for number, gender and case.
10. Inflections are added to all pronouns for different cases.
11. In Kashmiri, adjectives also decline with number, gender and case. However, the adjectives borrowed from other languages, particularly Persian do not decline.

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12. The helping verb or the verb 'be' used as main verb is different in different tenses. When the case is nominative, it agrees with the subject noun-head immediately preceding it. But when the case is oblique, it agrees with the noun-head immediately following it.

13. The intransitive verb in the continuous tense agrees in number and gender of the subject and takes different inflections in different tenses. Examples: *vothus* (I stood) *vetsh-is* (I fem. stood) *vothukh* (you Masc. Sing. stood) *vwatshvi* (You pl. fem.stood) *shong* (he Masc. Sing. Slept.) *Shonj* (she slept.) *shwangi* (I shall sleep), *shwangav* (We shall sleep.)...

14. The transitive verbs agree in number, gender and case of the subject on the one hand and with that of the direct object, on the other. Example: *tse perith kitaab*. You (singular) read (past+feminine+singular) a book. (You read a book).

15. Causative verbs undergo several internal changes in the suffixes...*naav*, agreeing in number and gender of the personal pronoun functioning as the indirect object and also agree with the tense.

The basic sentence structure of the Kashmiri language resembles English and other European languages rather than the Indian languages. This unique feature of the Kashmiri language was much debated in the early twentieth century and it was established that the syntax of Kashmiri is SVO (subject-verb-object) and not SOV (subject-object-verb) as we find in all Indian languages. Grierson, for the first time, observed that in Kashmiri "the verb rarely comes at the end of a sentence, but usually occupies the same place as in English." (1911: 78)

Now Kashmiri is being designated as V/2 language, the finite component of the verb phrase always takes the second slot in a basic sentence. Peter Edwin Hook studied this characteristic of the Kash-

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miri language in detail and grouped Kashmiri as a V/2 language. He wrote:

> ...it is a V/2 language like High German and some modern North European languages, in which the finite verb follows, not the subject, but whatever sentence-level constituent comes first, be this a noun phrase or other. (140)

In a basic sentence, that is a simple, active and declarative sentence, the word-order in Kashmiri is invariably of SVO type, vis-à-vis the SOV type of the Indo-Aryan and Dardic languages.

tsya	*perith*	*yi*	*kitaab*
you+ERG	read+past+CONC	this	book.

(You read this book.)

swa	*chhya*	*tryeish*	*chyavaan*
she	is+CONC	water	drink+cont. aspect

(She is drinking water.)

In the pre-Islamic period it was the *Shardah* script that was widely used for writing Kashmiri. The *Shardah* was a form of the *Brahmi* script. Devnagri was also used for Kashmiri. However, it was the *Nast'aliq* form of the Persio-Arabic script that was accepted as the normal script for writing Kashmiri after the fourteenth century. In 1947, the *Nast'aliq*, with the addition of various diacritics was declared as the official script for writing Kashmiri. It is now the practice and norm that all the words borrowed from Arabic and Persian are written in their original spelling. Some writers, essentially the non-Muslim ones living outside the Valley, write mostly in Devnagri script.

The written records of the literary tradition in Kashmiri show that even in the tenth century CE there was a well-developed poetic tradition, grounded in mystic philosophy. The tradition began parallel to the great philosophies that existed in Kashmir and had reached a highly developed stage in terms of variety, profundity, and intricacy.

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The intellectual renaissance in Kashmir started with the migration of a large number of intellectuals to Kashmir from all parts of India, even the southern region of the peninsula. They enjoyed every kind of facility and comfort, especially in the court of Avantivarmana (eighth century CE). Several *mathas* and *aspthapanas* were established in every corner of the Valley where the learned Brahmins meditated and produced great works of art, aesthetics and wisdom. The specialists in Indology believe that more than ninety percent of Indian literature was produced in Kashmir. P.N.K. Bamzai wrote in his book *Culture and Political History of Kashmir,* "In ancient times Kashmir was the 'high School' of Sanskrit and scholars from all parts of India came to the Valley to study at the feet of great teachers and savants." (233) Similarly, Grierson wrote in 1919:

> For upward of two thousand years Kashmir has been the home of Sanskrit learning and from this small Valley have issued masterpieces of history, poetry, romance, fable, and philosophy. Kashmiris are proud and justly proud of the literary glories of their land. For centuries it was the home of the great Sanskrit scholars and at least one great Indian religion, Shaivism, has found some of its most eloquent teachers on the banks of Vitasta. Some of the greatest Sanskritic poets were born and wrote in the Valley and from it has issued in Sanskrit language a world famous collection of folklore. (78)

It was quite natural that literature in the vernacular could not remain unaffected by Saivism and Sanskrit. Somadeva's world famous classic *Kathasaritasagara* (*The Ocean of Tales*) might have been very popular among the masses and many of its tales become an integral part of Kashmiri folk literature. Similarly, there are many references here and there about the rich literary tradition in Kashmiri. Khsimindra, the great philosopher, has quoted some verses from Kashmiri poets in his treatises, but the verses are unintelligible to present-day reader.

Though no collection or work of this period is extant, it is safe

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to believe that the tradition existed. And then, being the watershed of many races, and ethnic groups, Kashmir had welded together many myths, tales of imagination and songs that were passed on from one generation to another through oral medium. Side by side with the folk literature, there were numerous ascetics who preached their Saivite thought through the language of the masses. The most popular form of this elite kind of oral literature was the *vaakha* (Sanskrit *vaakiyaani*). Since the ascetics were called the *Chhumas*, their quatrains were called *chhuma pad* that were the legacy of the Buddhist times. With the decline of Buddhism in Kashmir in the seventh and eigth centuries and the rise of Kashmir Saivism, the same form of poetry was used for the propagation of different concepts of various schools of Saivism. Kshemindra Vyasa wrote in his *Alamkaara* (eleventh century) that he advised the contemporary poets to study and write in their mother tongue. He also referred to a poetic symposium in which the chief Guru recited some of his verses in his mother tongue.

The earliest extant literary composition in Kashmiri is the *Mahanayaprakasha* of a great Saivite poet Shri Kantha of the twelfth century. Shauq writes about the poet:

> There is hardly anything for certain to say about the author except that he lived near Pampore, and that he wrote Mahanayaprakasha in response to King Sangram Singh's request. The commentary written by some unknown Sanskrit scholar, included in the original MS, reveals that Shati Kantha was affiliated to the Udyanpitha school which preached Abhinovagupta's (eleventh century) *Pratibhinjnya*, a doctrine of Kashmiri Shaivamat closely related to the school of Vedanta founded by Shankaracharya, who visted Kashmir in the early years of the ninth century. (315)

It was in the fourteenth century that the real history of Kashmiri literature began with verses of great saint-woman poet, Lal Dyad. Her poetry is unparalleled in terms of profound thought, beauty of

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expression, and perfection of form. Lal Dyad, though a practising Shaivite, did not compose poetry just to postulate doctrines of philosophy, but also to give expression to her spiritual insight. Her concept of man's place in the world and man's relation to the ultimate reality occupy centrality in her poetry. She was essentially a poet before being a philosopher. She avoided philosophical jargon and chose the language of ordinary masses for creative expression.

Lal Dyad was born in the second decade of the fourteenth century at Padmanpore near Pampore. She renounced the world and dedicated her whole life to the service of the masses by preaching forbearance in the hardest of times in the history of Kashmiri people. She instilled hope in the minds of people when all hopes of survival were dying out, for the poor masses were reduced to helpless insects under the feet of the warmongers like the Tartar Zalchu. She roamed from village to village and taught faith in God and in man's own strife. She also opposed superstition and obscurantism so that the masses were not exploited by the bigots.

Lal Dyad chose the form of the *vaakh* for her aphoristic sayings. A typical *vaakh* is a four line stanza with a variety of rhyme schemes. The word is derived from Sanskrit word *vaakiyaani* which means a cryptic saying.

Here are some of her mellifluous verses conveying spiritual message in the language of the folks. Her spiritual sayings are an illustration of her sublimity of soul and its expression.

اومہٕ پَنہٕ سو دَرس ناوِ چھس لمان
کتہٕ بوزِ دَے میون میٚنٛتہٕ دیہٕ تار
آمٕنٛ ٹاکٕنٛ پوٚنٛ زَن شرٛمان
زُو چھُم بزمان گرٕ گرٛچھ ہا !

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آلیس وَتے گُلیس ہٕنہٕ وَتے
سُمن سوتھ منز لوٚسم دوہ
چندس وُچھم تہٕ ہار ہٕنہٕ اَتھے
ناوٕ تارس دِمہٕ کیاہ بو !

آلیس تہٕ سیوٚدے تہٕ گژھ تہٕ سیوٚدے
سیٚدِس ہوٚل مٕے کریٚم کیا؟
بو تس اُسس آگرے وٚوٚدے
وِدِس تہٕ وینٚدِس کریٚم کیا؟

کھیٖنہٕ کھیٖن کران کُن نو واتگھ
نہ کھیٖنہٕ گژھکھ اہنکاری
سٕنٛے کھٕے مالہٕ سٕنٛے آسکھ
سوٚم کھیٖنہٕ مُرٕنے برٖنین تاری

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ناپدی بارس اٹھ گنڈ ڈیوٗل گوم
دِہہ کاڈ ہوٗل گوم ، ہیکہٕ کیوٗ ہو
گورِ سُند وُنِ راوُن تیوٗل پیوم
پہلہ ر وٗس کھیوٗل گوم ہیکہٕ کہیو

پوٗت زوٗنہٕ وُتھتھ موٗت بولہٕ نووُم
دگ للہٕ ناوُم دَیہٕ ہنزِ پریٕے
لُلِ لُلِ کران لالہٕ وُزنووُم
میلتھ تس من شرٛزیوم دِہَے

ژیٛتہٕ تورگ گگنہٕ بزٛمہٕ وون
ژیٛلتھ میٛلوتھ دشہٕ ناڈِ واو
توَے شش کل ویٛگلتھ وُژہم
شُنیس شُنیاہ میلتھ گوٗو

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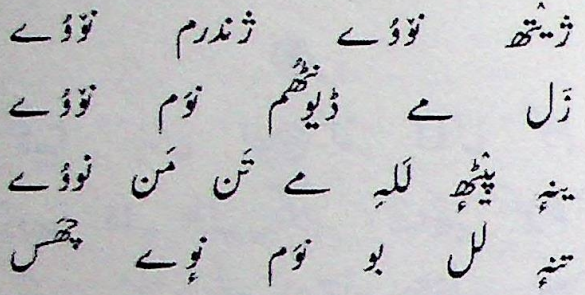

Vaakhs

With the thread of God's name I tow my boat in the ocean,
O God, heed my call and ferry me across;
As water seeps through unbaked earthen pots
I yearn to be home again.

I came here the right way, but did not return the same way,
The sun set when I reached the shore;
I fumbled my pocket and found it empty,
What shall I pay the ferryman to take me across?

I came here and shall go back on the right path,
What harm can the wayward wanderer do me?
From beginning I was known to Him,
Awake and lovelorn I am why to worry?

Eating all the time shall lead you nowhere,
And giving up eating shall make you arrogant;
Eat moderately and be moderate
Living moderately shall open all gates for you.

(Tr. Shauq 53)

Loosened is the shoulder knot
Of my bundle of candy.
Bent like a bow is my body.
How can I carry this burden?

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My Guru's words to achieve detachment are painful.
A flock without a shepherd I am —
How can I carry this burden?

(Kak 33)

Awakening in the early dawn,
I summoned the restless mind.
Enduring the pain,
I devoted myself to God.

Saying "I am Lalla, I am Lalla,"
I awakened my darling.
On becoming one with him,
I purified my mind and body.

(Kak 49)

I took the reins of the mind-horse.
Through practice, I leaned breath control.
Then only the orb of the moon melted
And dripped down into my body—
Nothingness merged with nothingness.

(Kak 61)

The consciousness is new
And the moon is new.
I saw the whole universe moment by moment renewed.
Ever since I, Lalla, cleansed my body and mind,
I Lalla, have become ever renewed.

(Kak 74)

In the first *vaakh,* the poet imagines this worldly life as a journey in a perilous ocean. The speaker describes the journey as an inevitable one as she is separated from her God who is her abode. She is diffident about her personal effort and hopes that God Himself will bring her succour in the arduous journey. She pines for reunion and compares spiritual longing with water oozing out from an unbaked earthen pot.

In the second *vaakh,* the poet says that she came to this material world without a blemish. Man's birth is compared with coming

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by the right path as it happens because of the divine will. By getting engaged in material strife man's soul goes astray and then does not go by the same right path. She laments her want of having done good deeds that would help her go back to her original home. The lonely individual without having any attainment to his/her credit is conscious of the deficiency only when it is too late. The image of a person at the embankment of a river is quite apt. There is nothing in his/her pocket to pay the ferryman who could take him/her across.

Again, in the third *vaakh* we have the image of a solitary traveller who is confident about God's mercy and is sure that no enemy can do her any harm. She says that God knows her weakness and shall surely help her in her journey.

In the fourth *vaakh* quoted above, Lal Dyad suggests the middle path to live in this mortal world. She says that man's insatiable appetite for worldly gain is of no avail. But at the same time, she says that renouncing the world is equally bad as it might make man arrogant for having lived without food.

The fifth *vaakh* above draws a picture of a solitary person carrying a huge burden. The burden is so heavy that the bearer's body has become bent like a bow. But the burden is that of sweet candy which one cannot throw away. The poet wants to communicate that life is a big paradox; it is painful but also dear to man.

In the sixth *vaakh,* Lalla Dyad imagines God as her lover. She gets up early in the wee hours to awaken her lover from his slumber. She lulls him in her lap while singing him sweet songs. The lover wakes up and she merges with him. The two become one.

In *vaakh* seven above, Lal Dyad says that man's senses remain wayward running in all directions. It is constant control over the senses that one can have hold over one's consciousness as one tames an unruly horse. Painful Yogic practice alone awakens consciousness that otherwise remains hidden like the orb of the moon. Awak-

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ened conscious is called "*Shishkal*" in Saivism. Once it is awakened, it cascades down making the mind and the soul pure.

In *vaakh* eight above, Lal Dyad says that once consciousness is controlled and mind as well as body is cleansed, the whole universe looks freshly new. In the state of ecstasy, the seeker of truth feels as if s/he is reinvigorated and filled with fresh energy.

Lal Dyad's verses initiated a new trend in Kashmiri poetry. She rejected formal and pedantic court poetry and composed her verses in the common idiom of the time so that she could have direct communication with the masses.

It was Lal Dyad's pupil Nund Ryosh or Sheikh Nur-ud Din who not only carried this new style forward but also made it a fundamental poetic principle. Nund, born in 1378, came under the influence of the Rishi thought of the time, abdicated his home in his early youth, confined himself to a cave at Kaimuh village for several years, and came out with a new vision after undergoing arduous self-mortification. He became a Rishi and was called Nund Ryosh. Like his spiritual preceptor Lal Dyad, he wandered from village to village propagating his message of truth, forbearance and unrelenting strife in the world. He did not teach renunciation, but simple living, piety, continuous struggle for salvation, and resistance to exploitation. Since he opposed superstition and bigotry, he was made to undergo many trials and tribulations, even imprisonment. But being extremely popular both among Muslims and Hindus, the rulers and the feudal lords had to allow him freedom. He established a new order of life, called *Ryeshut,* and many of his ardent supporters and followers joined his mission. They established Rishi centres in every corner of Kashmir that are still the most important shrines in the valley. Baba Payam-ud Din's shrine near Gulmarg, Baba Zain-ud Din's shrine at Aish Muqam near Pahalgam, Baba Bam-ud Din's shrine at Bumzoo and his own shrine at Tsar are the symbols of Kashmir's identity where crowds of people belonging to all faiths,

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social strata, and castes visit, pray and seek salvation by performing Rishi rites. His verses in simple language of the rustic folks are memorized by every Kashmiri. These are considered as sacred as they call them "*Keeshur Qur'an*" (the Qur'an in Kashmiri). Nund Rishi is also called Sheikh-ul Alam and Alamdar-i Kashmir, meaning the Standard Bearer of Kashmir. His aphoristic and simple verses, applicable to many life situations are quoted whenever one has to authenticate an argument or prove one's wisdom.

All his verses are grounded in the simple rustic, agricultural life of the fourteenth century Kashmiri society. Every verse is related to one or the other personal experience or some facet of society. Since the society remained almost static throughout the six centuries after Nund Rishi, common Kashmiri folks remembered his verses and quoted them freely in conversation. They also quoted the verses when some kind of moral or religious issue was under debate.

Being directly related to the rural life of the common folks, his poetry is rich in cultural references and, as such, presents a colourful collage of the common life of the medieval times. It is, therefore, the most reliable source of information for all the students of culture and history.

Nund Rishi, like Lal Dyad chose the quatrain form of aphoristic poetry like the *vaakh*. However, his quatrains are called the "*shruks*" as every quatrain poses a thought for reflection. A "*shruk*" literally means a knot or a puzzle. Though highly didactic, it has an underlying humour that establishes rapport between the reader and the poet.

Here are some of his lucid verses that sound modern in diction as well as in purport:

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کُنیر اَے بوزَ کھ کُنہِ نو روزَ کھ
کمی کُنرَن کوتا دیُت جلاو
عقل تہٕ فکر تور کوٚت سوزَ کھ
کُمی مالہِ چٹھ ہیوٚ ک سُہ دریاو!

کُس پیہِ زٕنے کُن بے غرضیے
تیٚتھ وُسعت؟ آسہِ دِلس کس
جنہٕکہِ ہاوسہِ دوزٕخہِ پَے
دیہِ چھی کراں عبادت

نہ روزِ وَندِ تہٕ نہ ریٚتہٕ کولے
نہ بولہِ شرٚاونہِ پتہٕ کوٚستوٗر
نہ روزِ سوکھ ساوٚنہِ ہیہِ لولے
نہ روزِ دیہَ ساز سنطور

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تلہِ چھے زیُس تہٕ پیٚٹھی چھُکھ نژان!
وَنتہٕ مالہِ ! مَن کِتھ پژان چھے ؟
سُنٛ ژیٹھ سۄمبر تھ پیٚتٛی چھے موژان
وَنتہٕ مالہِ اَن کِتھ روژان چھے ؟

ناوِ وسَکھ کِنہٕ وۄکھلی کھسکھ
دُژیوٚت کرنہٕ لسگھ مو
یوٚدوَے اکہِ وتہٕ محکم آسَکھ
دوٗر پأنتھن لوسَکھ مو

بُلبُل پوشہٕ وارِ گارَان
موگل گاران ہُنی واس
ہٕہہ شال شُنٛ یالے گاران
کھر ژھاران گُہٕ، لد تہٕ ساس

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أ کِس برتل سازندر گیوان
وُدی چھُ لأ گتھ بِندرِ ہوٚتے
ببّیس رزِ تہٕ لورِ لایان
پانہٕ آشن کس کیاہ دیُتے

نومَے مےٚ نرِ ، نومَے مےٚ زنگہٕ
نومن بہٕ منگہٕ ، نومَے مےٚ دِن
نومہٕ یٚلہِ تھکہٕ نم ہنگہٕ تہٕ منگہٕ
اِ کس بہٕ منگہٕ تہٕ اِ کم مےٚ دِن

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Shruk

Understand the One and be one with the One,
The oneness is manifest all around;
Your reason and thought shall not comprehend the One,
Who is there to swallow the gushing river?

Who is there to bow before you without some need?
Is there any one to have such a broad mind?
The desire for paradise and the fear of the Hell
Make people, O Lord, pray before you.

The spring shall end and the summer shall end,
The warble of the thrush too shall end;
The dancing girl's youth and comforts shall end,
The rhapsody, music and dance shall end.

An abyss is beneath your feet, and yet you dance,
What keeps you, O dear so complacent and smug?
All that you gain there you leave behind,
Oh, what keeps you relishing your food?

(Tr.Shauq 45)

Would thou board the boat, or walk on land?
In two minds, thou will not thrive;
If thou chooseth a path, and firmly stand,
Distant destinations will not weary thee

(Parimoo 43-44)

In search of flower gardens roams the song thrush,
And the owl seeks the ruined corner;
The lion and the jackal wander in the wilderness,
And the wood-louse looks for dung and dirt.

(Parimoo 137-38)

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Musicians sing at the door of one,
Waking, he pretends to be drowsy;
Another is beaten with sticks and thongs,
It is God himself ordains it so.

(Parimoo 143)

Here are my hands and legs,
These shall I put to work for me;
But when my limbs get tired all of a sudden,
Whom shall I ask and who'll give me anything?

(Parimoo 181)

In the first *shruk*, the poet says that there is a Unity that pervades all diverse manifestations. The Unity is imagined as a gushing river. Nobody knows the beginning and end of the river. The only way to understand the Truth is to get immersed in it.

In the second *shruk* Nund Rishi castigates those worshippers who worship and pray either for the desire of the paradise or for the dread of the hell. Real and truthful worship lies in unselfish surrender to the will of the Supreme.

The third *shruk* quoted above is a beautiful portrayal of the transient world. Without making any prosaic statement, the poet presents four successive images. The cycle of seasons shall continue. All measurements of inexorable time in terms of seasons are seen as a delusion. If it is sweet spring today, it shall be scorching summer tomorrow. Neither spring nor summer is to abide. No pleasure like the melody of spring birds is to last forever. The enticing youth of the dancing girls of today is also fast fading. The ignorant engrossed in pleasures like music and dance should know that all these charms are hallucinations.

In the fourth *shruk* quoted above, we have a gruesome image of this perishing material world. There is a dancer rapt in dance with the hope that his dancing shall win him a reward. The dancer is

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unaware of the fathomless abyss that lies hidden under the surface. The dancer has no inkling of the ultimate annihilation. He continues dancing and desiring more and more. S/he never bothers that whatever is gained in this world is to be left here at the end.

The fifth *shruk* quoted above produces three images that speak for themselves. One may use a boat to travel or walk the distance, but if one's mind is in indecision, there is no way to reach the destination. Only one's determination and firm decision are sure success to cover long distances.

In the sixth *shruk* the poet shows variety in human nature. Nund Rishi gives four contrary images. A bulbul (a song thrush) remains always in search of blooming gardens, while an owl seeks desolate places in its nightly flights. Similarly, wild animals like the lion and the jackal remain wandering in the wilderness, while a 'wood louse' (a small multi-limbed insect) is always in search of dirt and dung. The poet makes no comments on these images.

In the seventh *shruk* Nund Rishi speaks of the injustice and inequitable distribution of comforts in society. The rich hire artists to sing at their thresholds, and in their inebriation they appear sleepy. The people of the working class on the contrary are lacerated and beaten to make them work more and more for the comfort of the affluent. The poet expresses his surprise at this divine injustice in the world.

In the last *shruk*, the poet means to say that man is the architect of his destiny. This idea is expressed obliquely when he says that man's own limbs are his best friends that can bring him sustenance. When the limbs all of a sudden get utterly exhausted, there is no one to get succour.

All the *shruks* of Nund Rishi are thus thought provoking images. There is an underlying humour and satire in every line. The popularity of the shruks is also because of the colloquial idiom and images drawn from the familiar surroundings.

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After the demise of Sultan Zain-al Abidin (Badshah) in the year 1474 CE, there began a long period of civil wars, treacheries in the court, communal strife and chaos and eventually sterility in all forms of creativity and thought. The sterile period lasted for more than two hundred years. There is hardly anything worth mention produced during that period. It seems that all talent and imaginative power of the people died out during that period. It was, however, of course for a brief time, in the reign of one Shahmiri Sultan, called Sultan Hassan Shah (fifteenth century CE) that some attention was paid to the revival of literature. Whatever has been preserved despite the intervening period of barrenness is assimilated in the folk lyrics and tales transmitted orally from one generation to another. It is not possible to date any of these beautiful songs and tales, but the tempo and diction intimate that they belong to that remote past. Here is a folk song, for instance, that depicts the pitiable condition of a rustic married orphan girl remembering her parental house. The pathos and music of the poem is swaying:

زوٗن کھٕرٕ مے لو پٕیٖہِ مے ببرے
وَسہِ زوٗنی بے کستن خبرے
بب واجٕنین بَب چھُ یوان نظرے
یَس نہٕ آسان سو چھےٚ نیران نظرے
وَسہِ زوٗنی بے کستن خبرے
زوٗن کھٕرٕ مے لو پٕیٖہِ مے ببرے
وَسہِ زوٗنی بے کستن خبرے
بأے واجٕنین بأے یوان خبرے
یس نہ آسان سو چھےٚ نیران نظرے

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Call to the Moon

The Moon rises and dew drops wash the garden basil.
O Moon! Come down to see the hapless girls.
Those who have their fathers are visited by them,
One without a father remains watching in despair.
O Moon! Come down to see the hapless girls.
Those who have their brothers are visited by them,
One without a brother remains watching in despair.
O Moon! Come down to see the hapless girls.

(Shauq, *Medieval Literature* 345)

In this little folk song we have the image of an abandoned married girl. She is nostalgic about the simple pleasures she has had in her parental house. She morosely remembers her kith and kin. She is all the time gazing out to see anyone from her parental house. She envies other girls married in their tender age and often looked after by their fathers and brothers. Being abandoned at her in-laws house, she wants to share her sorrow with the solitary moon shining in the sky. The moonlight is bright and garden basil is besprinkled with dew, and the whole world is depicted as bright and fresh. The contrast between the brightness and freshness of the outside and the gloom within the solitary girl sharpens the pathos of the poem. Shauq writes about the folk songs like the one given above:

> Kashmiri folk-songs, variegated in phrase and sentiment, are associated with the life in action: birth, childhood, marriage, sowing, harvesting, and various rituals and festivals. They represent the people's repressed propensities, subconscious drives, attitudes to the changing natural phenomena, and the social relations in medieval ages; the true history of the Kashmiri people is beautifully and most faithfully recorded in the folk songs of the land.
>
> (*Medieval Literature* 345)

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There is one luminous name in the literary history of Kashmir, as the name itself implies, Zoon (Moon), also called Habba Khatoon, who was the most outstanding poet of the sterile period of the medieval ages in Kashmir. She was born as a peasant girl at Pampore. No specific dates of her birth and death are given in any chronicle, but it can be surmised that she lived in the second half of the sixteenth century. The conjecture is based on the historical fact that she was married to the Sultan of the time Yousuf Shah Chak, who was imprisoned by the Mughal emperor Akbar when he conquered Kashmir in 1586. Habba Khatoon's poignant and extremely musical lyrics are still unmatched for their lucid diction, flow, pure passion, bold expression and imagery. Her love lyrics, part of every Kashmiri's memory, are an invaluable and integral part of Kashmir's legacy.

Here is one of her beautiful songs in which she quite boldly seeks reunion with her lover who has deserted her. She is pining in separation and is full of passion for reunion. The imagery of the poem is sensuous as it has a strong sensory appeal. It is a matter of surprise that Habba Khatoon could use this kind of bold expression to her pent up desire while the medieval thought pattern with all its ethical values was rigid and there was no tradition of such lyricism in the language.

مے ہہ کُرِ ژٕنے کتی پوشہِ دَسوانَے چھاو میأنی دٲنَے پوش

ہہ چھسَے زمین، ژٕچھُکھ اَسانَے
سپر س ژٕچھُکھ سَرِ پوش
ہہ چھسَے نیامَتھ، ژٕچھُکھ میزانَے چھاو میأنی دٲنَے پوش

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لأ لے گٹہِ منز ژو نگ زاجانے
بالے رؤدُس نہٕ ہوش
ژٕ چھٕہم شمع، بہٕ چھس پرٕوانے چھاو میأنٕ دٕنے پوش

رَژھِ رَژھِ رہتہٕ کول چھم سولانے
بَر ما گژھن لَچھِ پوش
کُنہِ ہتہٕ بُلبُلہٕ یتہٕ اکہِ آنے چھاو میأنٕ دٕنے پوش

بمتے زِلہٕ چھس سوز ولیانے
وِلہٕنے تھوٚو تھم نہٕ ہوش
کم کیاہ گوٚیوٚیمہِ میانہِ دٕنے چھاو میأنٕ دٕنے پوش

رَنگہٕ رنگہٕ تھُرٕ ی أمٕ کرالَن بانے
بیوٚن بیوٚن کوٚر نکھ نقوٚش
کینہہ دزایہِ ٹکٕ گُلٕ کینہہ جانٕنے چھاو میأنٕ دٕنے پوش

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Come Enjoy My Blossoms

I have prepared bouquets for you,
Come and enjoy my pomegranate blossoms.
I am the earth and you are the sky,
You are the veil over the secret;
I am the dish and you are the guest
Come and enjoy my pomegranate blossoms.
Laila lit a lamp in the dark,
In her childhood she lost her wits;
You are the lamp and I am the moth,
Come and enjoy my pomegranate blossoms.
The summer is gradually fading away,
All my blossoms are ready to wilt,
Come O Bulbul, come with some excuse,
Come and enjoy my pomegranate blossoms.
Day and night I sing for you,
You do not heed my melodious notes,
Is there anything that I am lacking in?
Come and enjoy my pomegranate blossoms.
The Potter's job is to make his vessels,
To embellish variously each of them;
Some are unshaped and some pretty.

(Shauq, *Kashmiri Poetry* 75)

The literary historians wonder to find how Habba Khatoon could write such unrestrained songs in that barren and gloomy era in Kashmir history when no form other than the *marsiyah* (elegy) did flourish.

Marsiyah writing was the principal form of literature of the age. All these *marsiyahs* were meant for group recitation on the days of mourning during the month of Muharam. These *marsiyahs* have a loose versification and have the common theme of the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and all his kith and kin at Karbala (Iraq) in the seventh century CE. Muslim scholars belonging to the Shiah

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sect have carefully preserved thousands of these elegiac songs as the community considers this bulk of songs as their sacred bequest.

After the decline of the Chak rule in the sixteenth century, we again find a vast gap in the literary history. The whole of Kashmir was engulfed by gloom and despair. However, during the Mughal times (1586- 1752), it was in the Persian language that Kashmiri genius found its full expression.

In the first part of the eighteenth century Kashmiri literature had its re-birth. Islamic mysticism with diverse concepts and metaphors gave a fresh lease of life to Kashmiri Sufi poetry. Shauq writes about this period:

> Kashmiri people, wearied and exhausted, embraced Sufism that worked as a palliative that saved them from the eremitic as well as sybaritic extremes and they could remain in search of Truth while remaining engaged in their simple chores of life. By instilling in their minds a never-faltering faith in the essential goodness of the divine scheme, Sufi saints, much revered by the masses, got them succour in getting relief from pain and suffering. They guided them in attaining easy access to the blissful state through participatory ecstasy in chanting and singing. They believed that Faith in merciful God was *ishq* (love) and the path of *Ishq* was the *Sama'* (singing). All the mosques, *ziarats* and *khanqahas*, became the centres of this ecstatic quest for transport from tyranny, pain, and suffering of the world. Song and the accoutrements of mass-singing and altruistic service to the needy became the ways of the Sufi.

Thus Habib Ullah Hubbi (1555-1617) said:

The music of *santoor* and *dahar*,
Though not approved by the tenets,
Is the life of all lovers.
Let us go to the fête.

The Sufi poets believed that the primeval force that caused creation was Love. It was Love that God was al-

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> ways there in time, but veiled from any observation, and it was His love for Himself that He created the diverse creation that He might be known. The whole assemblage of the visible and the invisible things is a mirror in which the Creator enjoys seeing the reflection of His Beauty. The Sufis, therefore, find every object, big, small, good and bad, and every phenomenon replete with that eternal Beauty. They believe that man's purpose of living in the assemblage of things is not to be a passive spectator of the creative activity, but being a dynamic force to contribute to the Beauty-led process of being and non-being. (*Medieval Literature* 237)

Thus it was in total withdrawal from the social order that Kashmiri Sufi poets of Kashmir wrote on the themes of love for the divine order, man's separation from God as a result of his 'Original Sin', getting ensnared in the material world, and his yearning for final reunion with Eternal Truth through denial of the self and undergoing pain and suffering. Some of the greatest Sufi poets in the language are: Mahmood Gami, Swachhi Kraal, Mumin Sahib, Shah Gafoor, Shah Qalander, Ahmad Batwari, Wahab Khar, Niama Sahib, Rahman Dar, Samad Mir, and Ahad Zardaar. Here is a typical Sufi poem of Mahmood Gami (1760-1855), the greatest poet of the nineteenth century and the founder of Sufi poetry in Kashmiri. The song tries to visualize the primordial chaos in the universe before God wished to create the world to make Himself known. According to Islamic mysticism it was God's love for Himself that he wanted to create the world that stands as a mirror in which God sees his glory.

عرشس تہٕ کُرسیہٕ کُن اوس دِنے
نۄن اوس بہتھ درمیدان

نے اوس تأریخ نے اوس سنے
ونے دردِ نیستان

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روٗداوس پٮٕنۍ ، بوٗداوس پٮٕنۍ
تیٚلہِ اوس سورٕے پریشان
گتھ اُس نہٕ کُنی ، وَتھ اُس پٮٕنۍ
وٚنۍ دردِ نیستان

تیٚلہِ اُس آدم تہٕ حوا زٮٕنۍ
تیٚلہِ اوس بادام باغ توشان
اَن اوس کھٮٕنۍ ، پَن اوس پٮٕنۍ
وٚنۍ دردِ نیستان

الفس تہٕ میمس اُس مِلوٚنۍ
اُنس مَل پیوٚ وگوٚ وحیران
د ، ذ ، ر ، ز ، ص ، اوس یٚنۍ
وٚنۍ دردِ نیستان

چھورٲ وی ٔ کتٕ اُمٕ دریاوٚنۍ
عقل تہٕ فکر گیہ حیران
ذات دیُت ہٲوِتھ صِفاتنۍ
وٚنۍ دردِ نیستان

وجود شہود کوٚ رمحمود نے کرنۍ
بقا چھُ موجود ، بوزِتھ اَن
سُے اَن پوٚرنۍ منصورَنۍ
وٚنۍ دردِ نیستان

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The Music Within

With my own ears the sound of music I heard,
Now to you let me narrate the tale of the flute.
The earth and the firmament were yet to be founded
He glaringly stood amidst the void.
No date was marked or years was named.
No rain was there nor light had shone,
All was thee but in utter chaos.
No story had begun, no path was laid,
Adam and Eve were yet to be created,
The almond blossoms were widespread,
The fruit was not tasted, no leaf-fall had occurred.
Alif and Meem were an undivided Truth,
The mirror got its amazement when given its rust,
No alphabet was invented, no name was there.
Many got inebriated by the waters of the stream,
Wisdom and reason have no answer;
Attributes gave the Self its visible form.
Mahmood sees all being as the evidence,
Be sure of the eternity that pervades all;
This is what Mansoor discerned and uttered.

(Shauq, *Kashmiri Poetry* 57)

The poem tries to capture the eternal music, called *sadaa-i-daraaz* (never ceasing sound) in Islamic mysticism that is the cause and effect of Creation. Addressed to his readers, Mahmood wants to sing of the beauty that existed even before the appearance of the existent. He uses the word '*naistaan*' as '*nai*' means a flute as well as nothingness. Though nothing was manifest and there was no human eye to see anything, the Creator stood eminent amidst the formless void. It was the time when there was no notion of time. Since the existent world is a manifestation of the Imminent Being,

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the 'almond blossoms' is a symbol of creation. Then the poet refers to the original sin that caused man's loss of paradise. Man was ordained not to taste the 'fruit', but his propensity for taste motivated him to defy God's order. This resulted in his loss of original glory and fall. The poet tries to visualize the 'Chaos' that existed when there was no language to define it. The reference to Mansoor Hallaj, the great Sufi thinker of the eighth century CE adds a new dimension to the poem. Mansoor Hallaj said "*an-al haq*!" (I am the Truth!) and was crucified. Mahmood, therefore, says that though it is a sin according to the prevailing faith to say "I am the Truth!", he shall continue to sing of the pain of the Flute. The flute stands as a symbol of the manifest world that suffers the pain of separation.

Mahmood Gami wrote many long narrative poems in which the theme of initial union with God, his fall and separation because of the Sin and final reunion with the Eternal Truth through penance is presented in the form of allegories.

Each of these Sufi poets had a circle of disciples around them and they continued propagating the teachings of their Gurus to next generations and this succession of gurus gave birth to many schools of Kashmiri Sufism, called *khaandaans*. Each poet took pride in belonging to one or the other *khaandaan*. The Sufi poems of the original Gurus were the models for writing new ones, and the tradition continues unabated.

Parallel to the Sufi poetry, the tradition of Shaivistic mystic poetry also flourished in the period from early nineteenth century to the third decade of the twentieth century. Some of the greatest names in the school are: Krishanjoo Razdaan, Parmanand, and Bulbul Nawgami. Their poetry, too, is marked with ecstatic music, sense of mystery, and devotional fervour.

It was in the genre of the *mathnavi* (a narrative poem, usually long, in rhyming couplets) that nineteenth century Kashmiri literature flourished. A large number of the *mathnavis* were

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written on diverse tales of romance, legends and wars. The tales of most of the *mathnavis* were adopted from Persian literature. Some masterpiece *mathnavis* are: *Mantiq-ur Tayya* (Mumin Shah), *Yousuf Zulaikha, Shierien Khusrav, Mansoornaamah, Leel Majnuun* (Mahmood Gami), *Gulrez* (Maqbool Shah Kralawari), *Shahnaama* (Wahab Parray Hajini), *Saamnaama* (Amir Shah Kriri) and *Saamnaama* (Lakhmanjoo Bulbul). The *mathnavis* are so numerous that they form the major bulk of Kashmiri literature in its totality.

There is hardly any prose worth mention written during the nineteenth century. Writing in prose began in the language with the translation of the Bible in 1821 when the Christian Missionaries engaged some local writers in the task. The events inspired some Muslim preachers to write in Kashmiri prose on various aspects of Muslim faith and jurisprudence. The most popular prose work of the period is *Keeshir Masli Kyitaab* (*A Book of Laws in Kashmiri*) written by a Muslim scholar, named Nur-ud Din Qari.

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Chapter — II

Kashmiris' Contact with English and Its Impact on Kashmiri Literature

In the previous chapter, besides giving a brief introduction to the Kashmiri language, we made a cursory survey of the seven hundred year old tradition of literature in it. We saw how various forms of literature emerged in the language and how literature of diverse forms remained steeped in the erotic-mystic themes. In the present chapter, we shall discuss different connotations of modern Kashmiri literature, that is the literature representing modern times. We shall try to find out how the people's contact with English and the English language and literature played a key role in initiating modernity in Kashmiri literature.

"Modern" for the present purpose does not refer to "Modernism", an aesthetic movement of the twentieth century in the West. It rather means literature that has come out of the centuries old medieval themes, forms, pure lyricism and romances. It means in this context, the literature that is representative of modern socio-cultural patterns of life. Man is represented as a distinct individual within particular socio-economic and cultural conditions. It is altogether different from the oral forms of literature and is read as text. Being

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written and documented, it cannot be like the body of folk tales or lyrics. Modern literature is produced, preserved, read and evaluated as written text. This principle entails that each piece of literature ought to be unique and different from all other literary compositions, it has to be new. Recording literature in the shape of manuscripts began in Kashmir back in the eighteenth century. However, the manuscripts were circulated within a restricted reading class, normally the aristocracy and a limited circle of poets. Printing and publishing is a twentieth century phenomenon in Kashmir.

In addition to various dramatic changes within the structure of Kashmiri society, one principal factor that led to modernity is Kashmiris' cultural contact with the Europeans, particularly the English. It is necessary to study how this cultural contact developed.

Among various regions of the Indian sub-continent, Kashmir has remained the central focus of all the travellers and explorers from other continents from times immemorial. The geographical position, cultural antiquity and linguistic history of the land, and above all mysticism have motivated many seekers of truth to reach this wondrous Valley, the crown of the world. A famous orientalist G.T.Vigne wrote in 1842:

> Kashmir will become the focus of Asiatic civilization: a miniature England in the heart of Asia... and, presenting so many attractions, it will become the sine qua non of the oriental traveller, when he be disposed to consider it as the Ultima Thule of the voyage, or a resting place, when he may start again for still more distant regions. (68)

Travellers from various parts of Europe started coming to Kashmir much before the Christian era. To be specific, it was in 550 BCE that Darius Hystaspes of Greece sent his resolute explorer Scylax to discover the origin of the Indus River. He eventually came to Kashmir. He, according to Herodotus (482-420 BCE), reached Kashmir and called it *Caspatyrus*, a name that resembles *Cashyapapur* for Kashmir in ancient Sanskrit books. (Shauq, et al. 2)

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There is no record of European travellers who visited Kashmir before the sixteenth century. It was in the seventeenth century that the fervour for knowing Kashmir increased with the publication of a travelogue of Francoise Bernier, a French physician who accompanied the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. His travelogue, titled *Travels in the Mughal Empire* was published in 1670 in Paris. It was soon translated into English. Bernier wrote his memoir in the form of letters to his friends in Europe. After describing the travails of his journey through simmering and parching plains of India, he expressed his thrill to have had the first glimpse of the "earthly paradise". He found the inhabitants of the land living in harmony with the elemental forces of the environs. Further, he observed that the Kashmiris were exceptionally talented in arts and crafts. He wrote, "The Kashmiris are celebrated for wit, and considered much more intelligent and ingenious than the Indians. In poetry and sciences they are not more inferior to the Persians. They are active and industrious." (402)

The account of Kashmir given by Bernier inspired a large number of European scholars, poets and naturalists to visit the land. It was however, after the "Amritsar Treaty" agreed upon by Maharaja Gulab Singh, and the British government in 1848 that Europeans' visits to the valley increased and the enthusiasm to study the land, its people and their culture was augmented manifold. Eventually a large number of books by the European scholars were published that describe the land and culture of Kashmir.

It is not possible for the present study to give a full account of the numerous books and research articles on Kashmir written by Europeans; a brief survey shall suffice the purpose. In 1714, Father Hippolyte Desideri, a Jesuit from Florence, arrived at Srinagar with a mission of propagating Christianity in the region. Inspired by Bernier's account of the Valley, the famous romantic poet Thomas Moore (1779-1852) wrote his long poem *Lalla Rookh* in which the backdrop of the romance is Kashmir. The poem was tremendous-

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ly popular in Europe as well as in India. George Forster, an officer in the Bengal Army, visited the Valley and other north-western regions of India and wrote his travelogue *A Journey from Bengal to St. Petersburgh*. The most outstanding scholarly achievement of the early European visitors is, however, H.H.Wilson's *An Essay on the Hindu History of Cashmir* written in 1825. He discovered a manuscript of Kalhana's *Rajatarangani* which William Jones of the eighteenth century had desperately sought. About this Sanskrit classic Wilson wrote:

> The only Sanskrit composition yet discovered, to which the title History can with any propriety be applied is the Rajatarangani, a history of Kashmir. This work was first introduced to the knowledge of Mohammedans by the learned Minister of Akbar, Abul Fazl, but the summary which he has given of its contents was taken, as he informs us, from a Persian translation of the Hindu original, prepared by order of Akbar. (1)

Three zealous explorers of the subcontinent, W. Moorcraft, George Trebeck and W. Gutherie, visited the Valley in 1823. Moorcraft published his observations of the Valley in his travelogue *Travels in the Himalayan Province, 1819-25*, which is considered to be a first-hand account of the era. In 1833, an English scholar, G.T.Vigne, made his long journey from Bombay to Kashmir. In his book *Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh and Iskardo* he wrote: "Cashmir still maintains its Celebrity as the most delicious spot in Asia, or in the world." (Vol.I. 1)

On the 16th of March, 1846, the *Treaty of Amritsar* was signed by the British Government and the Maharaja of Jammu, Gulab Singh. According to the *Treaty*, the British Government sold "the hilly or mountainous country, with its dependencies, situated to the eastward of the river Indus, and westward of river Ravi to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body for an amount of seventy-five lacs of rupees". (Brinckman 7) A positive development of this *Treaty* was that a large number of the British devoted them-

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selves to the spread of modern education in Kashmir. It was for the first time that English was taught as a compulsory subject in all the schools run by Christian Missionaries. The Pundits of Kashmir were the first to embrace English education. Charles Girdlestone wrote in his *Memoir on Kashmir*:

> The Pundits, a common term in Cashmiri for Brahmins, are the only persons who give much heed to education, and in their case, a study is generally prompted by the hope of office, they being the class on whom the Government and the merchants depend for clerks and accountants, or because, in certain families the profession of teaching is hereditary. (6)

It was in 1892 that the first Mission School was established in Srinagar under the supervision of J.S.Doxy. Father J.Hinton Knowles took charge of the school after Doxy. Knowles was a great scholar. With the assistance of some native scholars he collected Kashmiri folk tales and proverbs and translated them into English. He published his monumental books *Folk Tales of Kashmir* and *A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs*. The school was later on named Tyndale Biscoe School after the name of its third patron. Meanwhile, the Christian Missionary established three hospitals in Kashmir; one in the downtown of Srinagar, the second at Anantnag and the third at the bottom of Shankaracharya Mountain.

In 1866 G.W.Leitner began his long and arduous journey across north-western mountainous region and gave it the name "Dardistan". Frederick Drew conducted a geographical study of the terrain and published his book *The Jammu and Kashmir Territories* in 1875. G. Buhler toured in search of Sanskrit manuscripts and published his report in 1875.

Sir Walter Lawrence stayed in Kashmir for several years and wrote his wonderful compendious book *The Valley of Kashmir* which is still regarded as the most important book on Kashmir. The book, besides giving exhaustive description of the landscape,

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the flora and fauna, geographical details, social life, manufacture, arts and crafts, and highlights the glorious past of the people. He studied the causes of abject poverty of the people in the nineteenth century and suggested land reforms. The book also contains a chapter on Kashmiri language. The book was published in 1889 from London and was immediately popular among the educated classes of the state, giving them a consciousness of their glorious past and depravity in the present.

In 1900, Aurel Stein translated Kalhana's *Rajatarangani* and published the great classic from London. He also collected and translated beautiful stories narrated to him by a professional story-teller, Hatim Tilwony.

A pioneering work in exploring the history of Kashmir was done by Alexander Cunningham. His book *Archaeological Report* was published in 1933.

So far as Kashmiri language and literature are concerned, George Abraham Grierson's contribution is the most remarkable among all the Europeans. He was the Chief Supervisor of the *Linguistic Survey of India* project which he compiled and edited in nineteen huge volumes. Besides compiling, editing, translating and publishing the works of several Kashmiri authors of the past, he prepared the first four-volume *Dictionary of the Kashmiri Language*. He also wrote the grammar of the language, titled *A Manual of the Kashmiri Language* in two volumes. Grierson's works are, and shall remain, the basis of all research work on the Kashmiri language and literature in future.

The European scholars in the field of Kashmir studies developed contacts with several local scholars, poets, artists and common people and the result of this interaction was that many Kashmiris also showed interest in studying English language and literature. The interaction came to its fruition only after 1947 when the English language was officially made a compulsory subject in all schools and colleges of India.

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During the freedom struggle, there was a circle of the intellectuals associated with the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference that worked under the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who had distanced himself from the Muslim Conference and established his own party that stood for secularism, socialism and democracy. The intellectuals were influenced largely by Marxism and tried to initiate people's movement in favour of proletarian revolution in consonance with the historical revolutions in the then USSR and China. Abdul Ahad Azad (1903-1948), the most popular poet of the time, was the central figure in this circle of poets and writers. Some other important personalities who actively participated in the struggle were Prem Nath Bazaz, Prem Nath Pardesi, D.P.Dhar, Padam Nath Ganjoo, Moti Lal Misri, Abdul Satar Ranjoor, Abdul Kabir Wani, Abdul Satar Asi, and Ghulam Nabi Ariz. Even the most outstanding poet of the time Ghulam Ahmad Mehjoor could not escape the influence of this new circle of poets and intellectuals. Among the politicians, Sadiq Ghulam Mohammad was the most influential figure in this circle and some of the writers remained directly in contact with him.

The writers and politicians of the time were having close rapport with the All India Progressive Writers' Association or Unjuman-i-Taraqi Pasand Musanifin which was formally established in 1936. The first general conference of the writers belonging to different regions, writing in various languages, was presided over by none other than Munshi Prem Chand, the great fiction writer in Hindustani, Urdu-Hindi. The poets, fiction writers, critics, political activists established a branch of Unjuman-i-Taraqi Pasand Musanifin in the state in 1950.The official organ of the literary society was the journal *Kwangposh*. The journal evoked a kind of literary re-awakening in the state. It was mainly because of this journal that Kashmiri writers were motivated to experiment in various new genres of literature like novel, short story, drama, opera, travelogue, essay and literary criticism. Kashmiri poets, fiction writers, playwrights

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and critics accepted the theory and practice of social realism with the goal of transforming society. Kashmiri writers could imbibe the influence of Marxist literature and theories of criticism available in other languages of the world through English.

Among the younger writers who played pivotal role in the Progressive Movement are Master Zinda Koul, Dina Nath Nadim, Ghulam Hassan Beg Arif, Akhter Mohi-ud Din, Rahman Rahi, Ghulam Nabi Firaq, Amin Kamil, Nand Lal Ambardar, Bansi Nirdosh, Habib Kamran, Dina Nath Almast, Som Nath Zutshi, and Premi Nath Premi. All of them were exposed to new ways of expression by reading English literature. Their themes were diverse; related to injustice in society, threat of war, people's struggle, personal experience, loneliness, landscape, incongruities in human nature, etc.

Further exposure to English literature caused a gradual drift from hard and fast rules of social realism and propaganda advocated by Marxist ideology. They developed proximity with Modernism. Thus it was in the early sixties of the last century that the Progressive Movement showed signs of decadence, giving place to Modernism. They rejected the Marxist theory of art that made all forms of literature subservient to the political programme of the Communist party.

Modernism, a term used in the late nineteenth century in English, became an international movement in literature, music, painting and architecture in the early decades of the twentieth century. It was essentially a reaction against Realism and Naturalism. In English literature, Modernism began during the first decade of the twentieth century as a spontaneous reaction in the aftermath of the World War I when the whole of humanity was shaken by the horrors of war. Sensitive people were completely disillusioned with all manner of theories of humanism that wish to ameliorate mankind and to defeat all evil forces in society. Chaos and confusion were accepted as the essence of human life. Many theories of natural

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and physical sciences also conformed to this grim picture and disillusionment. Alienation and despondence became the fate of the thinking individuals and the sense of the apocalyptic, of destruction and desolation overwhelmed all forms of art and literature.

Though Modernism is based on the thought of Existentialist philosophers, in literature T.S.Eliot, Ezra Pound and James Joyce became the models of Modernist theory and practice in creative writing. These writers introduced the stream of consciousness technique, free verse style, fragmentary and innovative structures. In order to make a piece of literature rich, allegorical and archetypal and look like an ordered structure, they incorporated allusion, myths, legends, and parodies. The essays of T.S.Eliot and Ezra Pound influenced all the young and old Kashmiri writers and their poems were regarded as the best models to follow.

When Indian writers read the English writers, they too felt the hollowness of all theories of social justice and essential goodness of man. The ruptures, disorder, discord, absurdity, indeterminacy, unpredictability and ambiguity were recognized as the stark realities of all cultures.

In Kashmiri, Rahman Rahi, Dina Nath Nadim and Amin Kamil, earlier referred as the founders of the Progressive Movement, were the first to distance themselves from the Marxist theory and practice of art. Their poems and critical opinions influenced the young as well the old poets and writers. Among them G.R.Santosh, Muzaffar Azim, Farooq Nazki, Makhan Lal Bekas, Chaman Lal Chaman, Moti Lal Saqi, Naji Munawar, Moti Lal Naz, Shafi Shauq and Gulshan Majid contributed remarkably to modern Kashmiri poetry. They introduced the free verse, fragmented poetic structure, allusion and ambiguity in Kashmiri poetry. Major poets of Britain and America whose influence on Kashmiri poets is visibly felt are: W.B.Yeats, Gerald Manley Hopkins, Robert Frost, Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes, Robert Graves, Sylvia Plath, and Robert Lowell.

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Side by side with the poets in the language, the fiction writers, especially the short story writers and playwrights, embraced the theory and practice of Modernist writers of England and America. Akhter Mohi-ud Din, Hari Krishan Koul, Ratan Lal Shant, Hraday Koul Bharti, Umesh Koul, Deepak Koul, Farooq Masoodi and Gulshan Majid wrote such stories wherein they rejected well ordered plots, representational characters and tidy narratives. The major Modernist British and American fiction writers who influenced Kashmiri fiction were James Joyce, D.H.Lawrence, E.M.Forster, Henry James, Bernard Shaw, Joseph Conrad, and Hemingway. It was through English that Kashmiri fiction writers were considerably influenced by writers of other languages particularly Franz Kafka, Marcel Proust, Bertolt Brecht, Jean Paul Sartre, Henrik Ibsen and others.

In terms of themes and techniques, we encounter variegated parallels and even adaptations. Meanwhile, many classics of western literature were translated into Kashmiri and were published. For instance, Shakespeare's *King Lear* and *Julius Caeser* (Tr. Naji Munawar), Tolstoy's *War and Peace (*Tr. Muzaffar Azim), Gorky's *Mother (Tr. Ali Mohammad Lone),* Sophocles' *King Oedipus* (Tr. Naji Munawar), Emile Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (Tr. Muzaffar Azim), Tolstoy's *Death of Ivan Ilyich* (Tr. Shafi Shauq) and *Selected Plays of Chekhov* (Tr. Ali Mohd Lone).

In the next three chapters, we shall discuss the poetry of three major Modern Kashmiri poets Dina Nath Nadim, Rahman Rahi and Shafi Shauq who were influenced by poetry of the West in general and English in particular. The three poets with their individual approaches to life and distinct styles are regarded as the most authentic voices of contemporary Kashmiri poetry and their influence on other poets is pervasive.

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Chapter — III

Dinanath Nadim: An Imagist Poet

Dinanath Nadim emerged as the most outstanding poet of the post-independence era. It was because of his creative genius that he could take a bold departure from the lyrical preponderance of the two great senior poets of his time, namely, Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor and Abdul Ahad Azad and established his own style that became immediately popular among his contemporaries. It was not easy for Dinanath Nadim to get away from the shade of the colossal figures of Kashmiri poetry, because the two poets were immensely popular and had liberated Kashmiri poetry from the medieval ethos and hoary poetic aesthetic. No one could imagine that any poet could escape their overpowering influence and discover a new way of writing. Nadim, though rooted in the soil of tradition was conversant with English poetry and critical notions. He used his ingenuity to introduce a new approach to life. He felt that beauty lies in the rhythm of common life in the streets and villages and tried to seek inspiration from it, not in following the set patterns of verse. His revolutionary diction has swayed all his contemporaries. Here are some statements about Nadim made by some of the luminaries of his time:

1. The most significant poet of the period is Dinanath Nadim.

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In fact it would not be wrong to call this period "The Age of Nadim". The influence of Nadim is evident in the works of many poets, some of whom have borrowed not only his ideas, but also his verse image. Abdul Rahman Rahi's early work is seen clearly bearing Nadim's impressions. (Arif 34)

2. Nadim has passed through many stages and at each stage he is engaged in distinct thematic and stylistic experiments. That process still continues, so it is Nadim era. (Lone 56)

3. His contemporaries were not only influenced, but also inspired to write in his vein. Some of them went to the extent of copying his style while some adopted his poems in their new poems. (Saqi 78)

Before discussing the salient features of Nadim as poet and the influence of English poetry on him, we shall have a bird's eye-view of the ordinary life of this extraordinary genius. (The information is based on one of Nadim's interview with Moti Lal Saqi on the 19th October, 1984.)

Nadim (Dinanath Koul) was born in 1922. His father, Pt. Shankernath Koul, died when he was in his early childhood. His mother, Sunder Dyad, worked hard and sent him to a local school. He got his early schooling at Babapore school, and was then sent to the State High School at Bagh-i-Dilawar Khan, Srinagar, wherefrom he matriculated in 1929. After his matriculation, he got admission in S.P. College, but because of the financial constraints on his family, he could not continue his education. He was appointed as a teacher in a private school, named New Era School. Further, he raised money for his family by working as a private tutor. In 1940, he established Hindu High School. Meanwhile, he did his graduation from the Punjab University, Lahore, as a private candidate. He, later on, did his "Bachelor in Teaching" from the same University. While accepting various other assignments, he continued working in his own school for his whole life. Some of his closest colleagues and associates were

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Mirza Ghulam Hassan Beg Arif, Somnath Zutshi, Prof. P.N. Pushp, Ali Mohammad Lone, Moti Lal Saqi, Arjan Dev Majboor, Noor Mohammad Roshan and Rahman Rahi.

Although Nadim could not find opportunity to have his formal educational career completed, he was a voracious reader from his early childhood. He started writing in Urdu, Hindi and English in his college days. Many of his poems in these languages were published in the magazine of S.P. College – Paratap. It was in 1940 that he wrote his first poem in Kashmiri, meej keshyier ("Mother Kashmir"). The poem was in tune with the political struggle of the time, that is "Kashmir Chhoo Doo" (Quit Kashmir Movement) led by Sheikh Mohmmad Abdullah. The manifesto of the Quit Kashmir Movement, for the first time in the history of Kashmir, recognized the significance of Kashmiri language as the sole symbol of Kashmir's identity. Being inspired by the manifesto, Dinanath Nadim attempted a patriotic poem in Kashmiri emulating Bankim Chandra's "Bandey Mataram".

He continued writing regularly in Kashmiri inspired by Quit Kashmir Movement and urged by his contemporary poet Mirza Ghulam Hassan Beg Arif. With Arif's encouragement, Nadim read out a poem in a historical poetic symposium organized at Nishat Bagh in 1946. Arif writes about this event:

> After having a cup of tea, when I invited him to write in Kashmiri, he was a little perplexed. 'Look, my brother, ' he said, ' it is not possible for me.' But I being very fervent, I made him make the promise after much entreating. And he read out his first ghazal in the Nishat Garden Mushaira in 1946. The country was enveloped by a political cloud. Marshal Law was imposed. It was a lucky day for Kashmiri language. And since then, I believe, he never looked back, he gave up writing in Urdu and devoted all his time and energy to writing solely in Kashmiri and discovering the expressive potential of Kashmiri

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language, discover his own self and, using his God-given talent, he started enriching Kashmiri language. (4)

It was a poetic symposium on the Advent of Spring and Nadim read out his first poem in an enchanting cadence, absolutely new in Kashmiri:

mutsraavi bar tay daari vyesyiy soonth hay saali aav
temy aasyi tsuvmitsh looli hatyan kaaryi patyan seety
yaa aasyi shongmot myaanyi dyilikyan naari tatyan seety,
nati kyaazi vwashlyoomut chhu baalan tshaayi subhuk vaa.
Come O friend, let us open all the doors and windows,
He must have picked up a quarrel
With the lovesome flowers, or slumbering
With the fire burns of my soul,
How otherwise do I find the wind
Blushing behind the mountains.

In this short lyrical poem, he heralds the advent of spring, a symbol of freedom and prosperity. The speaker in the poem is in a state of euphoria and summons his friends, his countrymen, to welcome the long awaited spring. The burns of the speaker's soul signify the pain endured during a gloomy period of slavery, presented through the image of the gloomy winter. The advent of spring is intimated by the blushing morning breeze.

Nadim's poetic career in Kashmiri came into being in the most cataclysmic era of Kashmir's history when, on the one hand, the land was ransacked by the marauding tribal people from North-West, and on the other the people of the land were nonplussed by the sudden political upheaval of 1953.

It was during his college days that Nadim got influenced by the intellectual uprising and literary canons of the Progressive Movement. He was one of the founding members of the local wing of All India Unjuman-i Taraqi Pasand Musanafin (All India Union of the Progressive Writers), called the Cultural Front (1947) and associated himself with the editorial board of the Kwangiposh, the monthly or-

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gan of the Union, founded in 1950. He worked ceaselessly for the enrichment and success of the journal and contributed his poems, short stories and essays to it. In 1953, when Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was removed from his Prime Ministership and detained indefinitely, the Progressive Movement got re-organized under the banner of "Cultural Congress". It was Dinanath Nadim who led the new movement and wrote many songs and one opera, Bombur ti Yimberzal to welcome the change. He inspired all other writers to join the "Cultural Congress" and participate enthusiastically in literary activities of "Jashn-i-Kashmir", the annual Kashmir festival. One of his eminent contemporaries, Mirza Ghulam Hassan Beg Arif writes:

> Many armed personnel alighted from the carriage that entered the compound of the government residential quarter in which I was lodging. I heaved a sigh of relief when I saw Nadim coming out of the carriage. I guessed that all was well. It was not summon from Khwaji Yaarbal (the infamous police station). With a smiling face, Nadim entered my drawing room. While sipping his tea and conversing with me on many issues, he told me that he was sent by Bakhshi Sahib (the new Prime Minister). He further told me that a poetic symposium was scheduled that evening and there was a special invitation for me. I was taken aback. I could say neither "Yes" nor "No" as I was not in a mood to go behind the bars. My friend perceived my indecision and suggested that it was better for me to participate in the mushaira as it had nothing to do with politics. (56)

According to the statement of Arjan Dev Majboor, in 1935 Nadim wrote a lyric in the traditional style of the vatsun (a form of heavily alliterative short lyric with refrain meant for singing). (8) Most of the poets, including Mehjoor and Azad adopted the style of vatsun for their revolutionary poems. No poet could imagine of any other poetic form. Nadim in his early days also relied on the phonic rhythm of the vatsun.

Here is an excerpt from his very first poem:

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yaaviniki yaaribely aarively praarakhnaa
zuun nyieryi obri tely aarively praarakhnaa
draas bulbul juugy leegyith shahrigaami pay hyavaan
nyieb lobmay maanasbely-yie aarively praarakhnaa
Come out O wild flower, let's meet
At the water hole of our youth;
Come out as does the moon from clouds.
Like a wandering bulbul
I roamed through villages and towns,
I know you are enjoying yourself at Mansbal.

The poem has a cultural context as the speaker as a female invites all her childhood friends to have a carefree chat at the water-hole. She is a lovelorn damsel who has been in search of her estranged love. Her love, indifferent to her pangs, is enjoying himself at holiday resorts like Mansbal.

He could not escape the predominant features of Mehjoor's poetry. When he joined the "Cultural Front" later known as "National Cultural Congress", he simply imitated the reverberating style of Mehjoor. He wrote his poem swa viz ("That Moment") in consonance with Mehjoor's poem waloo haa bagbaanoo navbahaaruk shaan paida kar:

swa vyiz yelyi myoom geerath syini deeryith nyieryi tuufaanas
phuTan dand hardi vaavas zard rang gatshyi kaali asmaanas
gtshan gagraayi dam phuTy teeryi khasyi zardaar shyitaanas
traTan shah loosyi nabi grany kol getshith pyeyi duur veeraanas

Time will come, when my courage
shall defeat all typhoons, and break
the teeth of autumnal winds;
the sky shall change its colour,
the thunders shall be dumbfounded,

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and all the rich devils shall shiver;
the thunders shall breathe their last
and fall down away in the wilderness.

The poem expresses faith in the inevitability of revolution. Revolution means defeat of all destructive forces symbolized by typhoons, thunderbolts and autumnal winds that makes all verdure wither away. The anticipated revolution is depicted as the final end of evil represented by the "rich" landlords and capitalists. What is needed to realize this ideal revolution is man's courage and unvacillating will.

Although the poem is full of lyrical innovations, he could not overcome the restrictions of style that were established and consolidated by Mehjoor in the poetry of the time. However, there are some lines here and there in the poem that sound original. For instance:

vasan bwan zuun taarakh siry-yi pethryis pyaTh saman seeryiy
semyith dyin myieThy Shieras, needyimas, aazaad insaanas

The Sun, the Moon and all the stars
shall come down together on the earth,
to prostrate before our "Lion",
Nadim, and the free man.

Nadim remained engaged in his ceaseless creative activity throughout his life. He was perhaps the most respected and awe-inspiring writer of his time. Though he could not match the fame of his immediate predecessors, namely, Mehjoor and Azad, nobody could parallel him in his popularity among the contemporary literary circles that had the same mission of awakening common masses against feudal system. He was rather the nucleus of all the literary activities of his time. He represented Kashmiri language at many national events and also joined the Indian Cultural Delegation to the Soviet Union. Some of his contemporaries looked forward to receiving inspiration from his ceaseless and ingenious experimentation.

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After relentless strife and fruitful suffering, Nadim died on April 7, 1988 in a hospital at Jammu where he had remained under hospitalization for over four years. His death was widely mourned.

Nadim's poetry was a bold and visible divergence from the poetry of the time. The style, diction and versification established by Mehjoor and Azad had reached a stage of decadence due to blind imitation by a host of younger poets. In the meantime, Nadim paved the way for new diction and rhythm in which the limitations of Iranian prosody were replaced by a free flow of words as such the text danced with fresh gales of emotions and ideas. Formal clichéd similes and metaphors were replaced by vibrant idioms of the ordinary speech of the masses. His contemporaries were shocked but swayed by his poetry; they immediately accepted it as the viable poetic diction full of infinite possibilities for expression. The energizing impetus of Nadim's poetry on Kashmiri poetry of the mid-twentieth century was in consonance with the essential spirit of the quest for freedom. Freedom in this context is essentially a revolt against hardened norms regarding the craft of poetry. Conditioning makes poetic expression servile to non-essential aspects like rhyme and meter. Music ought to be inherent in poetry not externally imposed. If poetry is put under the obligations of some other art, it becomes mechanical, a droning and repetitive versification. Nadim perceived the need for change and became the founder of "Free Poetry".

It is an established fact that Nadim had not had any high level of formal education. The overall intellectual upsurge proffered by the Progressive Movement demanded every aspiring writer to be a well-read person before becoming a writer himself. The writers of the time discussed the themes, plots, characters and diction of great authors and tried to compete with one another in acquiring erudition and rich academic tastes. The Progressive Movement marked the age of genuine readers and produced many profound intellectuals who had a thorough understanding of world literature. But only a few of them were good writers themselves. Nadim was one of them.

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Besides having tremendous poetic talent, Nadim was a voracious reader. He possessed an insatiable thirst for reading the best of the best poets of the world and enhanced creative aptitude from diverse sources. He attempted to compose English poems in his early youth and aspired to be known as an English poet. He could not do so unless he was conversant with English poetry. He studied a few classics of English literature as part of the curriculum in his undergraduate course. William Wordsworth, John Byron, P.B.Shelley, John Keats, Charles Dickens, Robert Browning, Thomas Hardy and some other English writers were household names of the educated classes in the middle of the twentieth century in India and Kashmir. A critical study of Nadim's poetry reveals that he was familiar not only with English poetry, but through English language, also with other Western literatures, especially Russian literature. Trilolkinath Raina comments on the influence of various poets on Dinanath Nadim's poetry: "The writers who shaped his personality were the English romantic poets, Mayakovsky, Gorky, Josh, Ehsan Danish, and moderns, particularly T.S.Eliot." (116)

The impact of English literature on Nadim is also visible in terms of the poetic genres he experimented with for the first time in Kashmiri language. His acquaintance with English poetry, particularly that of imagist poets, and his being fed up with the mind-wobbling repetition of set phrases in hackneyed rhymes and rhythms of his immediate predecessors in Kashmiri poetry made him choose some alternative forms so that he could give vent to his overflowing fervour for poetic revolution. He abandoned the traditional native forms and involved himself in experimenting with various forms that had a long history in English poetry.

The very first innovation of Nadim had a tremendous impact on Kashmiri poetry. It was the introduction of the "blank verse". Kashmiri poetry had its own prosodic principles that were followed up to the end of the nineteenth century. Along with the adoption of Persian genres like the ghazal, a lyric in alternately rhyming

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couplets, and the mathnavi, a long narrative in rhyming couplets, Kashmiri Poetry borrowed many prosodic norms of Iran in the early twentieth century. The prosodic patterns needed drastic revision as they had grown stale by the mid decades of the 20th century. In this context, Nadim initiated the process of liberating poetry from the superfluous rigours of regular but monotonous prosody. The experiment was in tune with the overall intellectual background that was marked by a passion for freedom from all restrictions. Nadim, however, could not come out of the bounds of prosody all of a sudden. He moved forward step by step towards unrestrained delight of poetic expression.

In the first place, Dinanath Nadim gave up the quantitative measure and regularity of the verse lines. By using internal phonic music of words, he created an alternative music that did not depend on the prescribed length of lines. It flowed freely with the changing moods and sentiments. It resembled the "Sprung Rhythm" of Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89). Commenting on this characteristic of Dinanath Nadim's poetry, Raina comments:

> His exploitation of the resources of Kashmiri language is remarkable. With him the distinction between Hindu and Muslim Kashmiri may said to have come to an end, for he proved that Kashmiri is a rich and flexible medium as any and doesn't need to deck itself in borrowed robes. Using poetry as the vehicle of propaganda, he infused it with vigour and masculinity it had never known before. He made use of rhyme, rhetoric and effective repetition to awaken the sensibilities of men to the dangers of war, imperialism and capitalism. In fact during this period he hardly ever wrote a single poem without a direct political bias. (117)

Here is a stanza from his poem soonth ti harud ("Spring and Autumn"):

> ang dyut kwang jaaman aarivalan
> rang phyur gyilyi Tuuryav sendyjyi Dalan

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moosum laalan syendyi naalan pyaTh
aamits masval asinaavinyiey

The wild briers bloom with a hue of saffron,
And the wild tulips and mustard blossoms
Have covered all the fields.
The innocent poppies start
Smothering the curls
Of the narcissus near mountain streams.

We can compare it with Hopkins' poem "Hurrahing in Harvest":

Summer ends now; now, barbarous in beauty the stocks rise
Around: up above, what wind-walks! What lovely behaviour
Of silk sack, clouds! has wilder wilful waver
Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies?

Comparison of the two stanzas clearly shows that Dinanath Nadim like Hopkins wanted to free Kashmiri verse from the traditional rule-bound rhythm so as to bring verse into closer relation to common speech, to free rhythm from linear unit and to achieve a free flow of emotions and ideas. In this form of alternative rhythm, the number of stresses in each line is regular, but they do not occur at regular intervals. The lines do not have a uniform number of syllables. It is not linear but runs through the stanza. The theme of the soonth ti harud ("Spring and Autumn") is the outburst of revolution. Instead of making any statement regarding political commitment, Nadim compares it with the advent of spring which gets manifest in the creative force represented by early-spring flowers. By personifying each flower, the poet tries to show how the creative force of spring brings total alteration of the earlier order of things. However, there is hardly any new imagery in the poem; it uses the same metaphorical expressions used by his predecessors.

One of the most successful, and undoubtedly one of the best poems in Kashmiri, is Nadim's mya chham aash pagihich ("I Have Hope in Tomorrow"). He wrote it during the Progressive Move-

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ment. The poem is remarkable for free play with rhythm and quest for new rhythms that were inconceivable in the forties of the twentieth century. In this poem, the poet adopted the form of monologue. The lone speaker is a young woman whose husband has been sent to war. The poet has aptly represented the emotions, aspirations, sense of loneliness, and premonitions by using the first person point of view. The girl is pregnant and hopes that she shall be a mother tomorrow that is near future and there will be peace so that both her child and husband would be safe. The poem was written against the background of the World War II and the first Indo-Pak War in 1947. War Poetry in English has a special place which depicts the absurdity, horrors and personal and collective suffering of people. Poets like Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Isaac Rosenberg who served in the army during the World War I wrote many remarkable poems out of their personal experience, and are commonly known as War Poets. Nadim's poem mya chham aash pagihich is a paradox about pains of war and hope despite war. The speciality of this poem is that it is in the form of a dramatic monologue. A dramatic monologue is a form of poem in which the poet invents a character in a dramatic situation, under stress or in an excited state, and reflects on the situation from the character's standpoint. The invented character may either belong to the past or the present and reflects on a certain life situation from the character's standpoint. It is different from the conversation poems in which the poet reflects on life in his/her own person. The form initially used by Tennyson, was established and used most profusely by Robert Browning. Browning's poems, like My Last Duchess, Fra Lippo Lippi, and Men and Women, are regarded as landmark poems in the form. It is different from soliloquy as in the latter there is no listener in view and the character reflects on his / her condition. In a dramatic monologue, a listener is always in the mind of the speaker. The poet takes every care that the poet's own personality is not involved in the expression. Nadim knew the technique and used it in many of his other

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poems like dal heenznyi hund vatsun ("A Song of the Boat Woman") and keeThy daarvaazi pyaThi garitaam ("From Kathi darvaazi to Home"). Here is the full text of the poem:

مے چھم آش پگچ

1

مے چھم آش پگچ
پگاہ شولہِ دُنیا
دوہس گاش ہُرِ ، گُل تہٕ گُلزار پزٕ زلن
زمینس سسر لگہِ تہٕ سبزار پزٕ زلن
وچھس منز ہمس لولہِ فمُوار پزٕ زلن
پگاہ شولہِ دُنیا

کرٕل لاگنٕے مے گژھاں أچھ کزٕ آلی
وسٕم دوٗد تہٕ دوٗدٕ ٹینڈٕ گژھن مے وزٕ آلی
تہٕ دَہہِ ہُرٕ د شہارِیہِ سون سأٰلی
پگاہ شولہِ دُنیا

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کنن گژھمۍ ''چاں میاں'' ژلیم وٗہٕ تہٕ وایے
وچھس تلِمۍ ژہ ژہ کریم آیہٕ گژایے
لبن لوسہٕ کٹھے ہے کھسیم مولہٕ مایے
پگاہ شولہِ دُنیا

''ہٗہ'' برژرنہِ تل گن تھوٗتھ بوزِ لوٗت لوٗت
سہٗ تھٗز کارتھاوَتھ بیٖہٕ نیرِ لوٗت لوٗت
تہٕ وہٕ وُن ہیمس پوٗترِ مألس بہٕ سوٗت سوٗت
پگاہ شولہِ دُنیا
نیم سٕدرِ پننے : ''وِدَو چھے مبارک!''
بہٕ چھس پوٗترِ مأج چھترِ بوٚنی فکرِ تارَ کھ
پگاہ شولہِ دُنیا

دیاں جنگ چھُ ودتھوُن! پگاہ گوٗژھ نہٕ سپدُن!
پگاہ شولہِ دُنیا پگاہ گوٗژھ نہٕ سپدُن!

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2

مے چھم آش پگہ پگاہ وعدِ چھم تس
بہ دوہ لوسنۍ ہی تھرنۍ ژھایہِ پرارس
تہِ ہیمال زَن لولہِ تے مایہِ پرارس
گژھیس ژیر، غم کیا چھُ بے وایہِ پرارس
پگاہ وعدِ چھم تس
سہٕ یہِ مایہِ موت ژھایہِ ہوٚل گرایہِ ماران
کریم کتھ بہ روشس تہِ چھہ لگہِ اشارن
پگاہ وعدِ چھم تس
سیٹھاہ ہو گنہِ رٹی تن، بہ تھوٚ کارِ بون کُن
تہِ یلہِ ڈلی رٹیم تیلہِ وُچھس اِد اُچھن کُن
رٹیم نالہِ اِد انوش درُن ماچھُ ممکن!
پگاہ وعدِ چھم تس
تھوٚ تھ کارِ کوچھِ منز دِلکی دادی باوس
تہِ روپہِ سپنہِ کی داغ نذرانہِ تھاوس
پرٕ ژھس بو: ''ژنے کولا جتھس لولہِ داوس؟''
پگاہ وعدِ چھم تس

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ونیم : ''دوہ چھِ نزدیک ، ژھوہ مارِ یاوٗن
چھُ نٔکی پاٹھکی اسہِ لول ہاوٗن تہٕ باوٗن
پٔتیم پتھ چھُ تراوٗن ، تہٕ نوٗ ونچھِ ناوٗن''
پگاہ وعدِ چھُم تس
دیاں جنگ چھُ وو تھوٗن!
پگاہ گوٗژھ نہٕ سپدٕن!
پگاہ وعدِ چھُم تس
پگاہ گوٗژھ نہٕ سپدٕن!

3

مے چھُم آش پگچ
شُرین مول واتیم
یتھے بوزِ آلو تیتھے برونٹھ نیرس
رٹن نالہٕ متہِ زورِ ، أندز أندز بہٕ پھیرس

نوٗس تاز گاسس پیٹھن جاے شیرس
شُرین مول واتیم
تھلتھ آسہِ آمت ، گوڈنی باد ناوٗس

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تہٕ مۄٹھ دۄگ دِواں وٚلۍ وٚلی بنٛدر پاوس
تہٕ ناوِ چی گیٹھر مرونہہ کنی نظرِ تھاوس
شُرین مول واتیم
گیٹھر منز نۄی گُل تہٕ گُلزار آسن
مۍ پٚٹھ، جانبہ کنہٕ واجہ طو، مار آسن
حبیبس ختن ہٚاج کٔتۍ دِمار آسن
شُرین مول واتیم
پۄنۍ عید کٔتۍ أسۍ پلۄنۍ بناوَو
تہٕ کٚپہ پۄ، تۍ جوراہ تہٕ قُربان تھاوَو
حبسِ ژالہٕ ماجن شیریں بأکراوَو
شُرین مول واتیم
دِباں بنگ چھۄ وۄتھۍ پگاہ گوٚژھ نہٕ سپٕدن!
شُرین مول واتیم پگاہ گوٚژھ نہٕ سپٕدن!

(Nadim 9)

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I have Hope in Tomorrow

I have hope in tomorrow,
The world shall shine,
The day shall be brighter
Blooms shall shine all around,
The earth shall get warmed up
And all shall be verdant again,
Founts of love
Shall gush forth in his bosom too.
Tomorrow shall be brighter.

Without putting kohl to my eyes,
My eyes shall look beautifully black,
My breast shall be filled with milk
And the teats shall redden,
The dashihaar shall return after ten long years;
Tomorrow shall be brighter.

With my own ears I shall hear
My baby's babble;
The birth-chamber shall be filled with joy.
Tomorrow shall be brighter.
And he shall be nosing round at the crevices of the door,
As a proud father, silently he shall move away,
Mutedly I shall sing him lays of love.
Tomorrow shall be brighter.

My friends shall assemble to pay me greetings,
"Mother of a son I am,"
With pride I shall tell them.
Tomorrow shall be brighter.

War is looming again, they say.
May there be no war tomorrow!
Tomorrow shall be brighter.
May there be no war tomorrow!

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II

I have hope in tomorrow,
Tomorrow is my tryst with him;
In dusky hours hiding behind jasmine bushes,
I shall keep waiting.
I am his Hyiymaal, pining in his love.
It might be he is late,
I shall still keep waiting,
Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
Hot with desire, he shall coyly step in,
I shall busy in making festoon for him.
When he starts chatting,
I shall demure and mope.

Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
He may touch my chin,
Yet I shall sag, and when he holds by skirt,
Then I shall raise my eyes.
But if he holds me in a hug,
How can I stop my tears?

Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
Keeping my head on his knees,
I shall narrate my woes,
My heart's ache I shall make him a present.
"Why you left me alone?" sourly I shall say.

Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
"Time has come when youth shall thrive,
No curbs shall debar us
From showing and feeling each other's love.
What is antiquated is to be left behind
And welcome all that is new.
Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
War is looming again, they say.

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Let there be no war tomorrow.
Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
May there be no war tomorrow.

III

I have a hope in tomorrow.
My kids' father shall be home again.
The moment I hear his call,
I shall go running to welcome him home.
Without losing a moment hold him in embrace,
And then take some rounds around him.
I shall make him a seat on fresh fluffy grass,
My kid's father shall be home again.
He must be feeling tired and wearied,
I shall wash his feet,
And caressingly massage and rub his limbs,
And thus put him to calm sleep.
The luggage he brought on his shoulders
I shall keep just near him.
My kids' father shall be home again.
Many a gift there shall be contained in the luggage:
A floral-print cloth for me,
Ear-rings and head-pendent for my little Jani,
Money for the circumcision ceremony for Habib...
My kids' father shall be home again.
New clothes we shall get sewed
For the forthcoming Eid.
A couple of lambs for sacrificial offering;
Candies we shall distribute among children of the street
When Haba is sent to school.
My kids' father shall be home again.
War is looming again, they say.
Let there be no war tomorrow.
Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
Let there be no tomorrow.

(Tr. Shauq)

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The poem in the form of a lyric resembles a dramatic monologue as the poet has used the first person singular point of view of the speaker and the imaginary audience is some of her intimate friend. The poet's own beliefs, likes and dislikes are nowhere revealed. The central character, the speaker in the poem, is obviously a young woman. By adopting the first person point of view, Dinanath Nadim has succeeded in creating a feel of realistic portrayal of the character. The woman naively gives vent to the rise and fall of her longings, hopes and fears.

Reference to the milieu and the moment is not direct, but clear through the recurring refrains. It is obvious from the images in the text that the speaker belongs to Kashmir. The images like putting kohl in eyes, waiting the return of the annual festival "dashihaar", feeling pride in giving birth to a male child, friends greeting the mother, father's feeling shy and all such images in the first part of the poem adequately suggest the cultural ethos that existed once in Kashmir. Repetition of the line "Tomorrow shall be brighter" is the mother's optimism but marked by a visible scepticism that surfaces in the text by the line "War is looming again, they say". It speaks of the instinctive trepidation of pregnant woman whose husband has already been sent to war.

The images in the second part of the poem suggest the bashfulness of a typical Indian woman who thinks of meeting her husband who has been separated from her by the compulsions of the times. She shall be in a huff when he approaches her after a long separation. Her temporary huff reveals her deep passion, not her real grouse.

When he starts chatting,
I shall demure and mope.
Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
He may touch my chin,
Yet I shall sag, and when he holds by skirt,
Then I shall raise my eyes.

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But if he holds me in a hug,
How can I stop my tears?
Tomorrow is my tryst with him.
Keeping my head on his knees,
I shall narrate my woes,
My heart's ache I shall make him a present.

But again ecstasy is overshadowed by the thought of the impending war. The repeated reference to the impending war amply reveals that the poem was written when the subcontinent in general and Kashmir in particular was doomed by communal hatred and the war with Pakistan. The speaker in the poem represents a common woman who has no knowledge of the politics of the war but feels in her bones horrors and suffering caused by the "absurd" war.

In the third part of the poem, the poet wants to show how a typical Kashmiri woman confined to the four walls of her house, and burdened by a variety of domestic chores, relied on the earnings of her spouse who would toil, brave all dangers just to eke out money to keep his family comfortable, fulfil the wants of every member of the family, and also help them perform the religious obligations. Sending children to school was the utmost ambition of every poor Kashmiri. The expectant young woman has many hopes about the things in the luggage bag that her coming husband would be bringing home. She happily imagines that her husband's bag would contain all the things she desires: printed cloth, earrings for the girl child, candies to be distributed when their son, Haba, will be sent to school and many more like these. Again the hopes of the naïve expectant woman are overshadowed by the fears of war.

Thus we see that this wonderful poem is in tune with all those English poems written during and after the World War I and the World War II. There are many parallels in English, particularly in the Georgian poetry that are similar in tone with Dinanath Nadim's poetry. Here, for example, is a short poem by Ivor Bertie Gurney (an

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English poet), 'To His Love' written in 1919 that expresses similar gruesome sense of death and destruction caused by the war:

To His Love

He's gone, and all our plans
Are useless indeed.
We'll walk no more on Cotswold
Where the sheep feed
Quietly and take no heed.

His body that was so quick
Is not as you
Knew it, on Severn river
Under the blue
Driving our small boat through.

You would not know him...
But still he died
Nobly, so cover him over
With violets of pride
Purple from Severn side.

Cover him, cover him soon!
And with thick-set
Masses of memoried flowers
Hide that red wet
Thing I must somehow forget.

Ivor Gurney's poem 'To His Love' is about death and there is no hope while as in Dinanath Nadim's poem, the woman is hoping against hope that her husband would be home again. Her hopes of his homecoming are bleak for most of the men sent to war did not return to their home. Perhaps they died unwept and unsung at the frontier.

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Dinanath Nadim gradually curtailed the profuseness of diction and chose suggestion and oblique description. Here is Nadim's famous poem zuun khets tsoT hish ("The Moon Rises like a Bread") published in 1950 which marks the consolidation of his new approach to language:

زوٗن کھٕرٕ ژوٚٹ ہش

دوہہ اکہ کوہہ پٹّی زوٗن کھٕرٕ ژوٚٹ ہش
نالس ژھیٚنہ ہٕرٕتہ وژھہ ترآوِ تھ
روپہ تہ ہنہ داغ نٛرآوِ تھ
پنہ پنہ گومٹ پاپٕر ی پوٚٹ ہش
زوٗن کھٕرٕ ژوٚٹ ہش تٛچھ ہٕرٕ گوٚٹ ہش
زن موزرنہ کس تام ژھلرآوِ تھ
ٹھیکہ درن اُ کی تھوٗپٕر آوِ تھ
پھٹہ وآلس تٛکر روپیا کھوٚٹ ہش
زوٗن کھٕرٕ ژوٚٹ ہش بوچھہ لٛچ بالن
آوبرن ہیٚرٕ بیٚہ گچ ژھیٚو راوٚنی
وہہ وِ گنیو پیٚوِ زن وتھہ دانس
بتہ گلٕی زن کھتی سنگر مالن
مٹیتہ ہیٚرٕ فاقہ پھٕرِ س شٛچھ باوٚنی
اُچھ پھری پھری وُچھ مٹیتہ اِسانس

(Nadim 76)

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The Moon Rises like a Bread

A round bread,
the moon rises
from behind the summits.

The moon rises,
with her threadbare and unbuttoned attire,
revealing the scars on her silvery body.

The moon rises
like a worn out threadbare silken shawl.

The moon rises,
worn and wearied,
like a fake rupee coin
in a handful of other coins,
put on the outstretched hand
of a wretched woman-worker,
by the cunning contractor.

The moon rises,
the hills grow hungry,
the clouds put out
all their hearths.
The forest nymphs
start lighting
their soggy stoves again.

The moon rises,
as if "paddy plants" grow
on mountain summits.

The moon rises,
I, too, feel hungry,
I, too, look up
toward the sky.

(Tr. Shauq)

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The poem contains a series of images that emerge by shifting the point of view of the beholder, a very poor worker. In conformity with the progressive view of "working class aesthetic values", Nadim portrays rising of the moon, a natural phenomenon through the eyes of an impoverished and hungry worker. The depiction brings in varying visual associations. The bread which looks like a round whole bread appears as a base rupee among other coins. The same moon is then depicted as a threadbare silken shawl, and then as a pretty peasant girl sparsely dressed. The moon being a symbol of hope, the forest nymphs begin rekindling their wet cooking hearths. At the end, the narrator is shown gazing at the moon with an empty stomach. Nadim, without making any statement, places the images in succession. This is how the socio-political rhetoric of the time got sublimated in poetry. The images of the moon reveal practical experimentation within the aesthetic of the Progressive Movement that believed that the values of objects of beauty need to be changed.

The poem in the original is a sonnet, again a form of English poetry introduced by Dinanath Nadim into Kashmiri. The sonnet in English was borrowed from the Italian models of Francis Petrarch (1404-1474). James Reeves writes about the sonnet:

> The Petrarchian form, consisting of an eight-line stanza (the octave) followed by a six-line stanza (the sestet) was abandoned by the Elizabethans in favour of a simpler form, but taken up again by Milton and other later poets. English poets have always found it difficult to express an idea in the exact compass of the sonnet, which by the very reason of its technical difficulty has fascinated them at most periods, from the time of Wyatt onwards. (39)

Dinanath Nadim, too, did not strictly follow the English model; he adapted it to his own purpose as much as possible in an oriental language. The sonnet in English is always written in iambic pentameter and has an octave followed by a sestet, but Nadim took many liberties with this classical norm of the form. He maintained the division of the fourteen-line form, but used a rhyme scheme that

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suited the subject. Nadim wrote many sonnets which became immediately popular among the Kashmiri poets who wrote many sonnets in Nadim's style. Examine the sonnet titled mya vunyi chhim yaad ("I Still Remember"):

مے ژنہِ چھم یاد تریشوے ساز چانی
مُدر نظراہ، موٚدُر آلو شِبج گتھ
رہج کاٚژاہ مے گیہ لوچ دِہو وَتھ
پشج پچ پاٚڈ رِکھ ہِش زندگانی
أستھ زن تاپھ نوٚن پیٚوو برأر کانی
وٚستھ زن کھور کوٚڈ ہردن ہناہ پتھ
ژنے وودش تروٚتھ دِلن کڈ وودٹھ گیس ستھ
یے کینہہ تاپہِ ٹیچہ کاینات میانی
نتے بتہِ ہاوساہ اکھ آوِ سیومت
ترُن سازاہ ضرب کھیتھ چھس وشِ لے
چھتے مژ شوخ تصویرچ جوانی
مُژھیل یاوٚن سیٹھاہ پکو پکو بلیومت
تھکتھ لوستھ تھواں رُچھ رُچھ پتم شے
یہ سونزل آسہ ما پوٚت ژھاے چانی

(Sheerazah 412)

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Tr.

I Still Remember

I still remember the three musical notes of yours:
A moist glance, sweet call and soothing voice.
The path of my daily love became mellow.
And my life began moving ahead
like a silken thread. As if
morning light illumined the gables,
or autumn, smilingly, withdrew its step.
You sighed and my heart had a new hope,
these very sunshine spots are all that I possess.

I am otherwise nothing but an enfeebled desire,
cold music, with a warm tune,
the youth of the painting has faded away.
The yearning youth has gone astray
in treading ceaselessly, wearied,
yet keeping alive the hope of the past,
this rainbow might be but your youth.

(Tr. Shauq)

In this poem, the poet speaks about his youthful days when he felt the whole world filled with rapture and resonance of music. The poet compares three aspects of the beauty of his lost love, "a moist glance, sweet call and soothing voice" with three notes of music that filled his world with joy and hope. In his reminiscence he recalls how his hope in his love gave him courage to move ahead in his arduous journey of life. The very thought of his beloved makes him feel as if morning rays made his heart and home, otherwise dark, filled with light. He glided through life like a silken thread where life became smooth and relaxing. Then when the hardships of life deprived him

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of even the memories, the vision of his lost love, like a painting, has faded away. He depicts himself as a forlorn traveller, exhausted and hopeless. But whenever, he has a vision of the beauty of his love, he feels fresh hope and courage. Even if there is no possibility of revival of old days and no hope of return to his love, imagination is eternal that shall never let him give in to despair. Like rainbow in the sky with its multifarious colours he recalls the perpetual youth of his lady love, his mind is rekindled with fresh hope.

The poem, suggesting many parallels from the 19th century English poetry, shows a contrast between the real vs. imagination. Nostalgia, loneliness, pangs of love and melancholy were the fundamental characteristics of Wordsworth, Keats, and others. Though his love did not reach its culmination, but he, like Keats believes that "heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter." In his despondency, the poet is conscious of the fleeting days and years, age and fatigue and loss of strength, but at the same time he derives new strength from his remembrance of his ardent love.

This sonnet is divisible into two parts, an octave and a sestet, but the structural division does not coincide with the thematic division. Likewise, Nadim has not retained the iambic pentameter as it is simply not possible in Kashmiri, but used such metric pattern as is natural in the language and befitting the subject matter.

In his later poetry, Dinanath Nadim bid adieu to the end-rhyme so that language of poetry came closer to natural speech that could communicate experience directly. The excerpt from his famous poem lakhchi chhu lakhchun is interesting. The poet, having abandoned all his stance of a propagandist and political activist, is contented with a very small object of beauty, which is a mole under the eye-brow of a beautiful damsel, named Lakhchi. This is how an aesthete could over-emphasize a thing of beauty to make it significantly poetic.

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لکھچہِ چھ لکھچن
بُمہِ ہنزِ سُمہِ تَل
ہِرِ دِ یہِ پرزلوٗن
زن ناٗ گر رایس
یارِ اٗ کِس تَل
منکہِ چھُ موٗ ٹھمت

بلہِ پوٗ رِس ژھاران ہیمال
نتہِ آسمانس رونہِ دامانس
اوبرس کوچھِ کیٹھ سنگرمال
لکھچہِ چھُ لکھچن
ہونجہ ہنزِ لنجہ پیٹھ
موکھتہِ پرزلون
زن مجنونس نجدِ ونس منز
خواب چھ آمت لٰال چھنے پراران ٹھرِ دِ تھ بال
نتہِ زن رٲ ژچھُ بُتھِ پیٹھ تُلمت
شبنم تتھ چھُ بنیو مت خال

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The Mole

Lakhchi has a mole,
Under her eyebrow line,
A shimmering pearl,
As if Nagyraaj under a pine tree
Has lost his jewel, and Himaal
In Balapur is in its search,
Or the sky in its bell bedecked hem,
Has a cliff, Lakhchi has a mole.
Lakhchi has a mole,
On her chin
Shining like a pearl,
As if Majnoon
In the wilderness of his Laila
Leaning against a cliff;
Or the night
Has chosen one dew drop,
Turned into a pearl...

(Tr. Shauq)

In this poem, a pretty mole on the face of a damsel gives rise to a series of images, and many of these images look like conceits. The use of the conceit as a literary device, based on far-fetched comparisons, is part of all classical oriental poetry, and Metaphysical poetry as that of Donne. Dinanath Nadim's imagination gives birth to images that are quite fresh in reference to the things of observation, legend and myth.

The whole poem is a chain of similes, metaphors and conceits, each creating a vivid image. The poet expresses the subject, a mole on the face of his beloved, in such a way that nothing but pleasure through ingenious aptness is the purpose of the poem. This type of poem, full of poetic ornament, defies all interpretations and needs to be read in its original cadence.

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Mohammad Yousuf Teng, an eminent critic in Kashmiri, has rightly said about the poetry of Dinanath Nadim:

> The art gallery of Nadim's word-pictures is replete with life. When we read his imagist poems, we feel as if his time has got petrified into concrete forms and as soon as we try to apprehend these images, these petrified images begin to dance and the hustle and bustle resounds in our ears and bedazzles our eyes. (121-2)

Dinanath Nadim, the founder of the blank verse in Kashmiri, wrote most of his poems in it. However, it cannot be called blank verse in its technical sense as it is not in iambic pentameter, its basic characteristic in English poetry. It can be called unrhymed verse. It has its own internal but natural rhythm that follows no prescriptive rules. By introducing unrhymed verse, Dinanath Nadim paved way for other Kashmiri poets to come out of the traditional lyric forms like the vatsun and freely communicate complex ideas.

Discussing this experiment, his son, Shantiveer Kaul, himself an innovative poet, writes: "...Indeed, Nadim has used what T.S.Eliot calls 'anti-prose strategies' in much of his poetic output, having deployed them very effectively in his 'Progressive' phase." (27)

It was under the impact of English poetry, that Nadim was fascinated by the Japanese Haiku adopted by English/American imagist poets. A typical Haiku is a miniature poem consisting of three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables respectively. (Kachru 70) The form was successfully experimented by the imagist poets of the twentieth century, especially by T.E.Hulme who is considered the prophet of Imagism. Some other outstanding imagist poets are Hilda Doolittle, Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams. Imagism started in England as a reaction against diffuseness, untidiness and imprecision in verse. Imagists believe that a poem has to be essentially brief as objective expression of the experience of the moment. They dispense with metre and rhyme that generally cause diffuseness and use of unnecessary words. (Mundra 23-24) Dinanath Nadim opted

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writing imagist poems when he became conscious of the loose and diffuse structure of Kashmiri short poems and when he was being criticized for sacrificing poetry for alliteration and rhyming words. However, Nadim did not retain the original prosodic structure of the Haiku and invented his own form that resembled the haiku only in its aphoristic expression and concrete images. Here are a few of his most popular haiku-like imagist poems:

سنگہٕ منگہٕ وُنی وُنی
ٹُنی یہچہٕ کُنی اُچھ
دٕکٕ گیہٕ انٛد وند
سوٚرے کینٛہہ ہے ہنگہٕ منگہٕ تہٕ دَم پھٹکٕ وُٹھ وُٹھ ہینہٕ آے نظرن بندٕ
سس وال
تہٕ مالا مال سپٕدانہٕ گٹہٕ ہُند باڈو

(Nadim 211)

Waking of the Void

All of sudden, not long ago,
The solitary eye of the void was injured.
All is struck dumb.
The thin fibres of the vision
Make a twisted skein; what a munificence of gloom.

(Tr. Shauq)

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The image is transcendental in nature in which "the solitary eye of the void" is visualized against the backdrop of the whole cosmos. The poet, a solitary individual, feels as if darkness gets thickened in texture and is felt like a tuft of fibres. The poet's use of 'pathetic fallacy' is remarkable in transferring the feelings of the individual to the cosmos. The association of the image of the solitary eye of the void with the following thickening of darkness is because of the awakened consciousness of the poet, who perceives the stillness in ever-widening spaces.

Transferring the attributes and faculties of one sense organ to another is a recurring quality of Dinanath Nadim's all imagist poems. This poetic strategy not only gives beauty to the image but also brings effective expression to some feeling, memory, sensation, fleeting gnomic vision or even some abstract idea. Here is an image to illustrate how the poet gives palpable qualities to a whisper:

پتھر س پیٹھ ٹلہٕ کتر س پیٹھ پچ
کھر پھسرارے
وتہٕ وتہٕ تھوسہ انہرارے یٚٹھ
سمین، پہرن، قرنن لکھن ہنز انہرارے
یوگہ چونکھر پیٹھ یوگہ چونکھر تام
دٕ ہ آتاسس منز گیہٕ غاٚب
تہٕ وتہٕ کتہٕ گنہٕ یہٕ ؟

(Nadim 211)

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A Whining Whisper

On the slippery ice-crest
glides a whisper,
whining
with every movement;
whines of moments, years and ages, smoke.
from the beginning of time to the end of time;
now engulfed
in smoke, never to be detected again.

(Tr. Shauq)

The whisper clearly suggests a fleeting reflection of the times gone. One feels a shadowy thing gliding on the surface of cosmic consciousness in a faint whisper. The whole vision is then irretrievably lost in times that human beings usually divide into seconds, minutes, years and ages for the convenience of reason. The image suggests the futility of reason that tries to comprehend aeons of time. The vague image of the whisper gliding down the peak of mountain covered with ice disappears in the valley of smoke. Nothing is substantial or constant in life. Everything is in flux. The resultant perception of the conscious mind is the vague search which invariably ends in agony and pain. Thus the poem brings forth the meaning of cosmic time beyond the comprehension of human mind.

ڈپھر تہ ڈپھر چھنے
ژھاین ہنز ہنز پیر ان
گلی گہلنین اندز اندز
ون واشک باس دوان

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لکھمن رکھ پیٹھ دینہ پۄ دتر آوۄ
انہ گٹہ منز کتہ ژھار جٹاین
وستن بُند رنجہ ۄن آکار
تہ رامس کتہ بیہ الماسک پھور کنہ ڈنجہ انہ وتہ !

Challenge from the Dark

Bevies of shadows,
weave a fabric;
exile in wilderness
under and around the thickly copses.
Do not transgress Lakhshman's line!
Where shall they find out the matted hair?
Charming vision of lovely garments!
How can Ram's diamond-tipped arsenal
have rest?

(Tr. Shauq)

We find a cluster of images in this small poem. The forest is dark. Lord Ram, Sita and Lakhshiman are in the midst of darkness in their 14 years' exile. As the wilderness threatens, Sita ought to confine herself lest she should cross the line of control drawn by Lakhshiman. Handsome Lord Rama with his matted hair and ordinary garments looking lovely on him is not to be seen. How can Rama, born to destroy the evil, not use his weapons! In the poem darkness is synonymous with evil. The poem thus suggests a never-ending conflict between the forces of evil and the human will to destroy it. It is this conflict that is secret of movement in human life. Flashes of illusion are again visualized in the following two aphoristic poems through shadow-images:

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ڈلوان ڈلوان، اَنی کھتی گے وَتھ
کھلہِ ہیوٚت ژھایو کھیٚچہِ کھیٚچہِ نیرٕن
ہوریو ہوریو اہِ وندِ پھیرٕن
وُنی بُتی نس، وُنی پیٹی نس
وُنی منز مندٕلس جورٕنو جورٕنو
پاڈٕ پشچہ اَتھ منز گیہِ نیرِ تھ
زنِ پوژھ لاوِس برآرِس لوٚٹ رٕوٚٹ
وُنی اَتھِ آے تہِ وُنی گیہِ راسکر
رٕہوٚنی، زٕہوٚنی اُچھ ملون ہش
ژھنیوٚنی ژھنیوٚنی لو کچار کی دوہ گیہِ پانٕاسکر
اندٕکن چھنِس نِس وِرِوارس تل چھوٚ ہر ہرٕو ژھمٕ
زوزریمٕ اکھ ژھاے
نہ یہ چھٕ میون پان، نہ یی چھس یہ

(Nadim 212)

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In a Flash

Rolling and rotating,
break open the dungeons,
the incarcerated shadows
rush out,
and dance in groups, hand-in-hand,
not long ago.
The slimy silken tassels
slipped out from the fists;
or the fleecy tail
of a fox or a cat.
Just now in hold,
and now let pass.
A flash
of meeting of two amourous eyes.
Smoldering memories
of childhood peter out.
Far away
in an isolated thicket of willows,
moves about a shadow,
a solitary shadow
haggard and wearied,
bereft of limbs.
A lonely shadow,
nay it is me.

(Tr. Shauq)

Through a series of moving images, the poem draws a picture of shadows coming out of the dark recesses. The shadows assemble in some open space and dance in jubilation. The shadows are so delicate and evanescent that imagination is not able to catch any of them. The mute speaker, not identified in the beginning, is the lonely spectator of this movement and dance of shadows. In the second half of the poem the speaker is identified as the poet himself who remembers his childhood. In a flash he sees two eyes of someone who

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is subsequently identified as his own childhood. All the shadows fade away and a solitary shadow, "haggard and wearied" is shown moving about in a thicket of willow. The poet, in an intense moment of introspection declares that the lonely shadow is he himself.

Dinanath Nadim roped together many of his short poems under various titles like heerysaath ("Rumination"), and vihy ("Delusions"). In each of his short poems Nadim tries to capture a brief moment of time in a delimited space. The concreteness of images gives the reader a physical sensation. At the same, the inherent logic of the images gives the reader a mental elevation. However, it is the reader's job to seek his own associations with the fleeting moments captured in different frames of space.

Here are a couple of imagist poems of Nadim that form a part of a series of his poems, called heerysaath:

آبہِ ریِ کھاوا کھ ہیرِ وُژھ چکہِ مکہِ
بگھ تلماہ ہیتھ وودِ تھ تاج
وُنی کھسہِ ونتھِ پُپ ییرِ گژھِ دُنیاہ
ہیتہِ یو گن آسہِ میونے راج
اکہِ ڈکہِ ہچہِ کھنٹلچ سیکہِ شاٹھس
ژھوژرس پو چھرِ چھنہِ محتاج

(Nadim 35)

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A Creek

A creek of sparkling water flows down
carrying a splinter of wood as its crown;
"Soon there shall be a spate," said the creek,
"and I shall rule the world."
In a moment the running creek
is engulfed by a heap of sand.
Ripeness is never subservient to emptiness.

(Tr. Shauq)

The poem "A Creek" presents an image that suggests lack of humility, empty boast of the creek. But the unpredictability of nature is always there; the creek is suddenly lost in a heap of sand. Nature has its own wisdom that does not obey the vanity of self love.

بوٚٹہٕ کھورٲوٲ اکھ وتہٕ پٮٹھ پیومُت
اُساوٗ ہر تھ ژھاراں تریش
ہوٚناہ اکھ آولُمناہ کوٚرنس
پھُچ مژبُتھ کھنجہٕ دیُتنس پھیش
ڈالاہٕدِ تھ نیون نالہٕ اُکس منز
تریشہٕ ہُتس دیٖوازپھُٹ تریش

(Nadim 47)

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The Castaway

A worn out shoe, cast away,
lay at the roadside,
its mouth open, seeking water.
A dog passing by found the shoe,
stretched it angrily with its teeth,
and dropped it into a stream;
the thirsty might have quenched its thirst.

(Tr. Shauq)

The image in the poem is about a worn out shoe thrown away after use. The shoe is shown as a deserted thing craving for a drop of water to quench its thirst. A stray dog perchance finds the shoe interesting, tries to tear it apart. The dog, with the shoe in its mouth, drops it into a stream. The last line is an ironical comment on the futility of human desire.

وُتھ دِگہ تل لَجٕ بَزٕ لیجاہ اکھ
بُتھ چھلٕ چھلٕ کھٕرٕ ڈلہٕ دوٚبٕ باے
وُمر ن وآنسن ہندٕ ر مٹہٕ کھتٕ ہتٕ
پاپ تہٕ پُنٕ تس چھلنٕ آے
اوٚر آو کستام کھو' نتاہ کوٚ ڈنس
کتہٕ ن کینہٕ وٚن لوٚ گ تہٕ یہٕ آے
دوٚ یہٕ دوٚ یہٕ سٕ زٕ لوٚ نگ لوٚ گ منز کو چس

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The Cycle

A vessel with darkened bottom
lay under the drip of water falling from the eaves;
The vessel lay under water
like a washer-woman with her washed face;
the sins of all ages were washed away.
Someone, in wantonness gave it a kick,
the potsherds got a new life.
Two days after this,
there was a Hop-scotch in the street,
Paradise is just behind your heels.

(Tr. Shauq)

In this poem, the fate of an earthen pot is narrated, from its being a wholesome useful pot gathering the dripping rain water from the eaves to its getting reduced to pieces. Someone wantonly kicks it and the broken pieces are strewn in the street. A time comes when even the discarded potsherds become useful as playful children select one and make it dice to play a rustic game called hop-scotch (sazilong in the vernacular). One of the seven compartments in the square is called Hell and the other is Paradise. When the dice is thrown backwards, it might fall into the compartment called Paradise. The extended image thus could be interpreted as a paradox that reveals the temporariness of utility and futility.

The poem, without an overt statement, suggests that all forms of objects are useful. The pot in its complete form is useful as it is used to collect rain water dripping from the eaves. When it is broken into pieces, becomes dice for children to play hop-scotch. The children playing in the street feel happy as if they are nearer to heaven. Everything in this world is important. How you term it is the point. Thus the poem suggests that the cycle of form and formlessness continues in Nature.

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In several of his poems Dinanath Nadim shows the sense of mystery surrounding all objects. He brings into his poems the moments of epiphany when everyday common objects reveal something extraordinary.

Many of Nadim's poems are fragments of distinct images with no apparent connectivity. Each stanza of such poems can be read and enjoyed without contextual relation with the preceding or following stanzas. It was definitely under the influence of the theory and practice of Imagism that Nadim, in all his poems, refined Kashmiri poetry from the looseness of form and profusion of diction. To him, as Edgar Alan Poe and other symbolist and imagist poets had emphasized, a poem had to be brief and crisp. Hence he sharpened his poems to achieve brevity and objectivity. Imagism, as poetic movement had started in 1912 and was guided by Ezra Pound, an American poet. The Movement was inspired by the ideas of T.E. Hulme who opposed romantic concept of "organic form" and proposed that the poet must work consciously as an artist to make emotion obscure through images instead of expressing them directly without restraint.

Some salient features of Imagist poetry of Dinanath Nadim are:

i. Use of common speech and avoidance of ornamental and scholarly language.

ii. Creating unconventional rhythms that are suitable for the mood.

iii. Rejecting the classical notion of the distinction between "the poetic" and "the non-poetic" in terms of subject.

iv. Hardness and clarity of visual images.

v. Concentration rather than profusion, and

vi. Complete silence about their relevance to any set frame of ethics and beliefs.

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What mattered to him was objectivity and vividness of images with potential suggestiveness. Nadim's later poems belong to a type of poetry, what Ransom called "physical poetry". Nadim, like Ezra Pound, believed that the poet's task was to capture an instant of brief experience in the form of an image. An image, in the words of Pound is "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time." (Mundra 24)

In tune with Imagism, Nadim ceaselessly worked to give an alternative structure to a series of fragmented thoughts and emotions. The narrative element is compressed into images. The poet's task is only to present images to be deciphered thoughtfully.

Nadim's Naabad ti TyaThwyan ("Candy and Absinth") goes like this:

نابد تہٕ ٹیٹھ وٚن

نابد تہٕ ٹیٹھ وٚن
بجلی بتہٕ أندی أندی مُہُ جوراہ
وٚچھس پٹھ مہرٕتنی مہرازاہ
ہُتھ گلی شٚہلس تل ٹیکہٕ ہٕنی
وُنی وزاہٕ وٚوٕلی کنی چوکہٕ لِوتھ
کستام سالی وُزنہٕ اندر گمہٕ ڈُلی
سوٚمبلی مُشکن وُری چس دکہٕ دیٖت
منز گامہٕ چھُ پھولمٕت ژندن گُل

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نیلس پردس وُڑھ تھتھ رایاہ
گُلپترا ما سألس دراہز!
گُلدانس منز دون ٹوٗرِنن پیٹھ
دون سرپھن ہُند آکاراہ ہیُو
اندر پکھی سوٗدراہ شیشے ناگس
پمپوشس تھنہٕ پیومت بزہما
بو نگرِنن گووچھونی چھونی اُنہٕ اُندری
مے چھُ باساں راٗژ ہنزِ باہ آسن
ہُتھ پردس پٹی کِنی کتھ گتھ ہش
دوشوٗے دارِنو کِنی اُچھ جوراہ
کاٗژاہ بجہِ ، کاٗژاہ مایہِ بُرتھ!
مُدیاہ، وُٹھ گُجاراہ ، گِلناہ!
ریشم ریشم ! نرمی نرمی!
کھِرِ پتجہِ چھے وُژھمو شِنہٕ مأنیاہ

(Nadim 99-101)

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بوٗنیاہ ، بجراہ، بٕیہ شٕیجاراہ
سرواہ، سٕیز راہ، بٕیہِ ووٚنہٕ ژاراہ
سونہٕ چٕرٕن وُچھ تُج عرشس کھوٚت
دٕیوٚ مِنہِ مَرِ ووٚٹھ لٲے پکہٕ نارس
کنٛتی ما گرنس آلو دٕیت
نٕگنے منز شاید شُر تھنہٕ پیوٚد
اُچھ توٗر لبہِ پٕٹھ تصویرن
موٚزرٕنہٕ گر دَہہِ دُہٕ رِنس گتھ
ژٗندرم لوٗستھ نٕیہ گٹہِ اندر
چھوٚت رَخ لٲگتھ مریَم لوٚت لوٚت
بُمہِ کوہہِ دامٕنٛ گٕیہِ ژھٕپھ دِتھ کوٚت
سحرس بُتھٕ ہے ووٚشلٕنٛ کھاراہ
کنہٕ تٕیجٕہِ چھے ووٚشلیمٕ ا وٚبرس
چھلہٕ چھانگر گٕیہِ واوس زُلفن
گچھ سورٕے گوو گُمہٕ سُرٕ باغس

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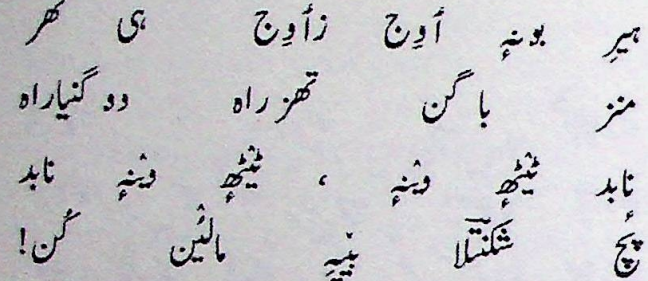

Candy and Absinth

Two mosquitoes whirl around the bulb,
the bride and the bridegroom in their wedlock circle.
There under the shady tree a daffodil,
just come out after having laved the hearth.
Someone is perspiring behind the pranky veil,
a gale of hyacinth aroma pushes the window -pane.
A sandal tree has bloomed at Manzgaam.
Blue curtains quiver,
Cleopatra is perhaps set out for a bath.
There are two buds in the flower vase:
a semblance of two serpents.
Shishnag is located amidst an ocean,
the lotus brought forth Brahma.
Behind the mirror, the bangles jingle.
I think it is the midnight hour.
A murmur is heard behind the curtain;
two eyes peep through two holes... how big, how loving!
A gaze a smile, a yank, all is silk, all silk.
An avalanche slips down the slope.
A chinar tree with profuse and soothing shade.
A straightly cypress with lofty height.
The goldfinch took flight to the azure.
The gazelle swiftly jumps into the flame.
Or, perhaps, Kunti called her Karna.

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A babe is born in the cowshed.
The picture on the wall looks agape.
After ten days, the work-woman talks to her spouse.
The waning moon sets, in the dark,
Mary, clad in white attire, ambles
along the hill-side and disappears.
The day-break is aglow in the face,
the pinnae of clouds are ablaze;
the hair of winds are ruffled;
the weed in the garden is besprinkled with dew.
A delicate jasmine bush cap-a-pie,
shapely bulging at the middle.
Candy and absinth, absinth and candy.
Shakantula thus walks to her father's house.

(Tr. Shauq)

The poem is a quick succession of the moments of pain and pleasure of a newly wed girl. Wed locked to her husband, she is shown circling around sacred fire. The image of two mosquitoes whirling around the bulb amplifies the effect. Then comes her first physical contact with her husband. The feeling of pleasure is suggested by a series of sweet images like daffodil having washed the hearth, a slight gale of fragrance of hyacinths, a rare sandal tree growing at a village and Cleopatra going for a bath. The union is followed by a process of creativity. The references to Hindu mythology aptly suggest the creative act. The succeeding images suggest the bride's pleasure and pride of having conceived. She finally returns to her father's house.

The subject is not new, but the treatment is perfectly in accordance with the canons of Imagism. The poet has consciously evaded all connecting narrative details to make the poem obscure. Obscurity is made essential as any theme concerning sex is considered as an anathema in oriental poetry. Nadim skilfully breaks the logical narrative of the poem, and, in order to achieve maximum oblique-

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ness of statement, linchpins unrelated visual images and allusions.

When the poem was published for the first time in 1960, it created stir among the contemporary poets for they felt a kind of shock. Writing about love has been perhaps the oldest tradition in Kashmiri poetry and there are thousands of love songs in the language, but all this love poetry is based on the pangs of separation and yearning for reunion. Often the poets of the past assumed the garb of mysticism when they chose to write about man-woman love because the ethical values of the feudal times prohibited emotional expression. Sometimes they gave it mythical colour to distance the passion from immediate involvement of the reader. Even upto the first half of the twentieth century, love and mysticism were intertwined. The creator was depicted as the male principle and the creation as the female principle; the two being separated, sought reunion. This relation between the real and the transcendent was expressed in a variety of musical songs that form the main bulk of Kashmiri poetry. Numerous long narrative poems in the language also indirectly convey the same sense of love and are generally interpreted as an oblique expression of gnosis. In such a literary scenario, Nadim's Naabad ti tyaThvyan ("Candy and Absinth") was felt a bold expression of sensual love which culminates in creation and productivity. However, inspite of this boldness, "Candy and Absinth" initiated a fresh wave of writing about erotic themes and eros is considered an affirmation of life. Such poems, among other things, revitalized the poetic medium.

Two more best known imagist poems of Nadim are: Keethy Darvaazi Pyathi Gari Taam ("From Kathidarvazah to my Home"), and Dyivur ("A Stone Temple").

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کاٹھی دروازِ پیٹھ گرِ تام

کھرِ وکہِ وِنی پھُلیاہ لُکہِ عرساتھاہ
تارن پیٹھی پیٹھی کترِ جہِ جماتھاہ،

وُچھ دِتھ کوٗت گیہِ

رنگہِ ترِیہِ ہنز گرُ کھ تاپھاپھولوٗن
کرِ مُٹھی ہلماہ زِلوٗن زِلوٗن
ٹِکہِ واوِ جہِ کُل رنگ دولسے متی
معصوم ہاوس پورِ چھوے متی
''توٗت کیاپاچھکھ'' ''پونس پی پی''
''منیتہِ گژھِ پی پی'' ''توٗت کیاپاچھکھ''
''ترشاہ چیمہ ہا! کترِ وگرپھٹ
نووگرہیمہ ہا''
''وو شلُن زن چھے بُتھ وو پھریومت
تھوٗ کمُت تھو کمُت شہہ تیزیومت''

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''وٚنی دِمہٕ ہاتھگھ !

کھوٚرِ ببہٕ تل دھک، دھکد ھک دھک!

''ٮُو جغرأنی عملی ہِند ساہ

نِو کأپی کیٖتھ کاغذ دستاہ

''تۄت کیا باچھُکھ'' ''ہیکہٕ نہٕ پگٕتھے!''

''وٚتے گرٕوٚنی'' ''مےٚ چھنہٕ ہیکہٕ تھے''

ژوکہٕ ژٚنی ہیکھ بی؟'' ''یہ چھےٚ نزلاور''

''أچھنے بوچھ چھس'' ''أتھ چھنہٕ باور''

''ہوش ہا گوٚبرا! بچ بی موجی!''

''لج سیہٕ پیٹھ گُن وولہٕ کھنہٕ للہٕ وَتھ

اجہ أچھ گاشا چھم چأنی سَتھ''

وولہٕ سأ مالیا گوٚبرا، ٹاٹھیا!

ڈبلس پونس سوٚرے دُنیا!''

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تۄت کیا باپھکھ '' بتہٕ وُچھِ لیلا

''اُکرِ ہے پونس دِلہِ ہُند سالاہ!''

ناوِد کنڈلس نکھ گرِ تھکھ دِین

''آنس بُلبُل!'' ''مٕیتہِ گوٚژھ اکھ دِین''

''ہیکھ بی کائل اَتھ چھامو لوٚن؟

یہِ چھُ سونٛگ پوٚژھ ژلوٚن ژلوٚن''

ہوش ہا گوٚبرا! بچ بی موجی!''

''اُڈی ہے پونس پاواہ لاجی''

''پُچھ کیا دِدی چھس اُچھ پوٚ رتھوٚیٕ''

یمبرزلہِ گوٚند نٛژوٚنی تارَکھ

زُنہِ ماجہِ اندی اندی بادامن گریکھ''

''ووران بتہٕ گوران'' ''کینٛہہ چھُنہٕ پروا''

''دندتہِ چھُ بزٕ کوان'' ''سُے تھاو لیس شہہ''

''انگوری اسمان کاژرٕ پھُلیاہ

اُو جغرافی عملی ہند ساہ!''

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"کنہٕ تلہٕ گٕے چھُم" "ژٕ چھ زے مُہٕس"
دَے میون ژٕچھنٕس کہو چہٕ تلہٕ چھوٚت
وَن بالِو کیاہ اُڈیٖک سون چھُس"

"لِو دَاہ یاباہ"

شأ مس ہَستی کوٚو میٖل سونہأرِس
نہٕلس زن کھوٚت چھوٚت اٹہٕ بأرِس
"لج سیہٕ پیٹھی کنٔے! منے چھنے چأنی ستھ
اجہٕ أچھ گا شو! بہ ہا کھودنہٕ للو تھ
وٚوندمیہٕ زُوٹنے گُمہٕ چھی آمتی
مالہٕ چھِ پٚھلی زن شرٕ کنٹین ژامتی

(Nadim 87-89)

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From Kathi Darvazah to Home

Heaving blossoms,
the madding crowds;
swarms of swallows,
perching on the wires,
flew together.
The sprint of spring,
warm is the sunshine.
Skirt-full of parched peas,
appetizingly warm;
a tree of pin-wheels;
brightening colours,
innocent desires mad to have.
"You are feverish!"
"A whistle for a paisa!"
"Get me a whistle!"
"You are feverish."
"I need some water.
My terracotta horse is broken,
buy me a new one!"
"Your face blushes, you look tired,
you breathe heavily, you seem to have fever!"
"I need to have a little rest,
the heart throbs under the left side!
"A new book of geography!
A new book of tables!
A roll of paper for a new note book!"
"You look hot!"
"I can walk no more,
How shall I be home?"
"Have a bunch of sour salad, O sister."
"No, it causes cold."

"Take care, my son!
Take to the side, mother! "
"I lay down my life for you,

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my darling, come
I shall carry you in my arms.
My eyesight! My only hope! "
"Take care O dear, O my son!"
"For just one paisa, a map of the world!"
"You're sweating!"
"I too want to see,
for half a paisa, a view of Delhi!"
"We shall sit for a rest at Navidkadal."
"A bulbul for one ana!"
"Get me one!"
"By a bunch of vegetables, ask not price,
it is spring's guest about to leave."

"Take care O son, take to side O mother!"
"For half a paisa, get a paav!"
"Your darling seems to have fever,
let he live long,
along with those of mine,
may he prosper!"
"A nosegay of narcissus,
twinkling stars, around Mother-Moon,
almond blossoms."
"He talks to himself."
"Do not worry."
"He shivers, twitches his teeth."
"God will save him."
"Grape-coloured the sky,
auburn flowers!
A new book of geography! A book of tables!"

"He is my sole son."
"Be he your support!"
"He is a little slothful."
"May God save him!"

The dusk merges
in golden glow,

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the green gets a whitish glaze.
"I lay down my life for your joy.
You're my hope. My dear eyesight.
I shall carry you in my arms,
my soul, my life.
Your drops of sweat,
shine like beads,
tight on a necklace.

(Tr. Shauq)

The poem sets the scene in the hustle and bustle of a common road in the city of Srinagar during a festive season. The varied images suggest that it is the spring festival at Badamvaari around the Hariparbat hill. A mother and a child are shown walking through the crowd of people on a busy road. There is no narrative and the action is revealed in the form of the cries of street vendors, tongawalas, toy sellers and women. The poem thus comprises a long chain of images drawn from the actual humdrum of life. The kaleidoscopic view of an old market place is visualized through bits of conversation among vendors of vegetables, toys, books, tongawalas, and other wayfarers. The central character is a young boy alongside his mother. The boy, though sick and exhausted, is tempted by various colourful things that he observes in the market. The mother, being poor, consoles him in different ways. The boy's longing and the mother's helplessness are in sharp contrast.

The poem can be understood as a dramatic view of the whole world presented as a glimpse of a small market, full of activities. In the first twelve lines we find a vivid description of the market. The reference to early spring season in Kashmir is in the mention of blossoms, swallows, warm sun-shine and pin-wheels and terracotta horses sold by toy vendors. In the next few lines, the boy feels tempted to buy all the things he sees while walking beside his mother. The mother, being poor, consoles him that he is feverish. The boy is sad

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and wearied and asks for water. Vegetable selling woman urges the mother to buy some vegetables, but the woman feels helpless and has many excuses. Some other woman in the market sees the boy and feels that he is sick. She prays for his health. In the concluding section, there is again a description of the same place but the time is evening. The mother again caresses and consoles her sad child.

Dinanath Nadim's image-hunt is guided by his belief in the fleeting existence of everything. Nothing seems to be abiding and nothing is useless. All things, big as well as small, serious as well as trivial are rendered full of meaning by the touch of the poet's imagination. He believes in the relativity of everything. In fact he seems to have been influenced by Albert Einstein's "Theory of Relativity" also. Here is one of his poems that could be studied the light of Einstein's concept of relativity. The poem renders all the natural phenomena transient, but related by the inherent logic of time and space. Without making any statement of the thought the poet produces interdependence of space and time through images of ordinary things, people and events.

مندین

تاہ وَتھراوِی تاپن زرباپکو
تھرِ نگھ اَلہِ تژوجہِ گو زال روپلو
زالس منز باگ ٹھگ بیوٚٹھ ژلو
چھٹہِ پونپرِ وَنہِ کٹرِ ٹیکو تاپکو
ژھیٚپہِ ژھرِ گِندُن کھارِن رنگہِ چھکو
ٹیٚنٛ پیرِنٛ ہُتہِ یوٚت، زالس جُت

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اکھ وودٕھ ، اکھ دَو، پھرٕ ٹہٕ تَم ، اکھ گیٚت
رنگ ژھیٹہٕ گےٚ ، لگٕ چکہٕ چاوس ہِکٕ
اکھ لٹھہٕ اگر وق دِیہ ہے تھٕکھ
وُنہٕ نوٚ ہن پھولہٕ ہَن باغس رنگ

دِگر

ٕگس ٕگس ٕگس ٕگس ٕگس ٕگس ، بوٚمبُر
وَتہٕ ڈوٚلمُت ، پھلوا، وَنہٕ راوٗل
معصوٗمہٕ چھےٚ کھُژہٕژ حُسنس تھُر
وِز ڈُج ہٕژ عشقس، گومُت بُل
اَہٕ سارِ چھےٚ لَجہٕژ، تھُچہٕژ دُپھ
چچ چچ، آمیٖن توتَن کیٚت وَے
ہوٚہس گو شوٗ ، بوٚمبرس گیٚہٕ زِپھ
باغس گو ژَس، سازس لَج کھے
اکھ لٹھہٕ اگر وَق دِیہ ہے تھٕکھ
وُنہٕ ٕگس ٕگس بر ہے واوس مُر

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شام

کٹھ سِرِ یَن ٹِکھ ، گو ژھانَن مٕیل
پھٹ گاشس تیٚہہ ، ہیوٚت پزِ لوٚب لوٚب
رنگ بٕکہٕ آوٹو ٚ ینٕن ، ہونجہٕ گوس رٔوب
شُرِ کھیٚچ پیٚچ زَن پوٚک وُترِ بُنٕیل
تھٕچھ ٹو ٚرِس لٔچ تھرِ پُژ نٕکھ دِل
رنگہ تارِ ژِ لوٚت گو شہہ ، زُد گوٚب
لٔچ سونزِلہ لتھ ، دزاس بٕیہٕ ہَن کوٚب
وَتہ پٕٹھ رَہتہ کُت پیٚوو اژِ پھوٚٹ گُل
اکھ لحظہٕ اگر وَق دِیہٕ ہے تھگھ
میٚز ستِر ما گژھِ ہے سونپس مٕیل

(Nadim 87).

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Four Moments: Four Tales

(To Einstein)

Morning

The wood-nymphs open their bills
sweet warble is heard;
the breeze stops
melody stirs, symphonies
gush forth;
tit tit... dub dub... the hearts throb.
Hush! a star falls... a swoop...and screams.
The wind softly blows, dew drops vanish,
a skein moves, or a shadow
glides.
Oh, could time have a little respite,
much more music would still
bubble forth.

Noon

The sunshine
spreads its brocades,
near the yonder bush,
a gourd creeper turns silvery,
the burglar takes to hiding in day time;
the motley butterfly finds
its sunshine spots, plays
hide and seek;
a spider, jumping up and down,
weaves its web;
a jump, a run, a scary stop, a ploy,
colours douse, a desire is throttled.
Oh, could time have a little respite,
many a colour in the garden
are still there to sprout forth.

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Afternoon

The drone, a vagrant, lovelorn, forager, hums,
innocence sprouts in a blooming bush.
Gathering and carrying, never-tiring trips,
stuff for the twittering hungry beaks.
Air blows softly, the beetle snoozes,
the garden slumbers, music dozes.
Oh, could time have a little respite,
many a melody would fill up the garden.

Evening

The sun drops, shadows coalesce,
light loses it luster, the beams get veiled.
The buds, replete with hues, close up.
A posse of children throngs in,
a tremor is felt.
The bud is culled, the heart is ripped;
colours gasp for breath,
the rainbow is kicked at, and more it bows.
A half-bloomed flower bleeds, lying in dust.
Oh, could time have a little respite,
a dream would not have dissipated into dust.

(Tr. Shauq)

The poem portrays the four phases of a day, that is, morning, mid-day, afternoon, and evening as four successive spaces as time cannot be understood without space. Each space has its own array of things that form a recognizable structure of the space. Time, according to Einstein is an infinite succession of spaces. Using this basic principle of physics, Nadim as a poet tries to capture four time-frames in the form of four spaces, each comprising many smaller spaces.

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In the first part, morning is shown a period of music. The forest nymphs, birds in the trees, and movement of breeze in the foliage, all contribute to this music. But the music is not abiding as it is gradually replaced by mid-day.

The second part of the poem, portraying the phenomena of the mid- day is again a series of images like: rays of light woven into a brilliant brocade; the creeper climbing up seeking support, a spider weaving its net and capturing its prey; a butterfly finding its desired spot on a flower, and so on. All these images are based on the colour of things. This phenomenon of colour is again overtaken by afternoon events in the same garden.

In the third part of the poem, a drone is compared with a vagrant, lovelorn forager. It is shown humming, suggesting poet's creative process, "Innocence sprouts in a blooming bush". All hectic activity in Nature is shown coming to rest. Again the time-frame is not lasting and is overtaken by evening.

In the fourth part, the poet captures the mysterious movement of shadows, their merging into each other giving rise to an amorphous darkness. All comes to a standstill and final sleep. The poet then gives a few images of his dream: a child culls an unblossomed bud, colours are suffocated, and the colours of a rainbow are trampled. He envisions all getting reduced to dust.

All the images, joined together with the logic of a poet, are evanescent, ephemeral, momentary, quickly succeeding each other, yet each having a music of its own.

To conclude, Dinanath Nadim continued experimenting throughout his poetic career. Through a careful survey of his poetry the reader sees a process of development from his early rhetoric style to the Imagist condensation. His study of English poetry side by side his creative activity has largely contributed to the dynamics of his poetic method. He is an imagist poet par excellence.

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Chapter — III

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Chapter IV

Rahman Rahi: A Symbolist Poet

Rahman Rahi's poetry and literary criticism epitomize all the major changes that have occurred in Kashmiri poetry and literary discourse due to the impact of Europeans, particularly the English poetry and poetic theories. Rahi, a living legend, was one of the founders of the Progressive Movement which had been influenced by Marxist philosophy. When the Progressive Movement declined, it was Rahman Rahi who paved way for Modernism into Kashmiri poetry under the direct influence of the modern English poets and the poetic theory. His poetry is, therefore, reflection of the whole dynamics of contemporary Kashmiri poetry that was augmented and directed by constantly changing critical notions about theme, diction, style and form of poetry and its relation with community. Though Rahman Rahi has been a source of inspiration to almost all the post-independence Kashmiri poets and critics, his style remained inimitable. While his two notable contemporaries Dinanath Nadim and Amin Kamil, Rahi have had their followers among the younger poets, Rahi as a lone crusader remained aloof and remarkable in the sphere of modern Kashmiri poetry. G.R. Malik writes about Rahi's poetry:

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> Rahman Rahi is one of the greatest of modern poets writing in Kashmiri. Among his contemporaries he stands out as one of those poets who do not yield their meaning in one reading. One has to read and reread them in order to discover the multiple levels of their meaning. As a genuine creative artist, Rahi's complex personality, his comprehensive vision, and his uncommon mode of thinking and perception reflect themselves in a highly original and (unless one familiarizes oneself with it) a bit unfamiliar style and technique. Rahi grows in complexity as he develops as an artist and masters his technique. (117)

Rahi is the pen name of Abdul Rahman Mir. He was born on May 6, 1925 at Wazapora Mohalla, Srinagar. After graduating from S.P. College, he did his postgraduation in English and then in Persian. After teaching at the undergraduate level for a few years, he was appointed a lecturer in the Department of Persian in the University of Kashmir. In 1975, he was appointed as the Senior Fellow of the newly established Research Cell for the promotion of Kashmiri language in the University of Kashmir. It was mainly due to his efforts that the Research Cell was converted into a full-fledged postgraduate Department wherefrom he retired in 1985 as a Professor.

Rahman Rahi began writing in Urdu in his early youth and many of his Urdu poems were published in the leading journals of the time. In tune with the poems of Urdu poets like Faiz Ahmad Faiz and other Progressive poets, Rahi adopted free verse style. About his first experiments in Urdu and their impact on his contemporary Kashmiri poet Nadim, Rahi says:

> Yes Nadim Sahib was not writing free verse in Urdu till then. It was after this popular free verse poem of mine in Urdu that Nadim Sahib shifted to free verse poem in Kashmiri; perhaps it was bi gyavi ni az ("I shall not Sing Today"). So Nadim Sahib was the first to write free verse poetry in Kashmiri while I was the first to write it in Urdu. (37-40)

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He associated himself with the editorial board of a prestigious Urdu monthly literary journal Aajkal published from New Delhi from 1955 to 1960. However he was soon to realise that it is only the mother tongue that could be the most viable medium for poetic imagination. Rahi developed a sort of devotional attachment to his mother tongue which is expressed in many of his essays and poems. There is a long poem titled jalvi ti zabuur ("Revelations and the Gospel") in which he describes his whole identity and existence as his life-long association with his mother tongue Kashmiri.

Rahi has got wide recognition as a modern Kashmiri poet who took visible departure from the poetic idiom established by Mahjoor, Azad and Nadim. He introduced his own individual way of writing which is distinctly identifiable from all other contemporary styles and may be called 'Rahi Style'. He received recognition and appreciation in his early youth. His very first collection of poems titled nav rooz-i sabaa ("A Symphony in Oriental Music") won him the prestigious Sahitya Akademi literary Award in 1958. Rahi, in his literary career, got many other state-level and National awards like 'The Best Book Award' from the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (two times) for his nav roozi sabaa and kahveT ("Touchstone"). The 'Robe of Honour' from the State Government, highly prestigious national award 'Padamshari', 'Saraswati Award' and, then at the zenith, the most coveted 'Gyan Peeth Award' in 2007. Rahi, being a professional poet, wrote on variety of themes like religion and patriotism. His panegyrics and musical lyrics have special attraction to the reader. He has an extraordinary mastery in using highly ornate poetic diction.

Even during his active role in the Progressive Movement of the fifties, Rahi was different from his fellow poets in choosing such themes as were not directly in conformity with the political agenda of the times. Being deeply influenced by the English romantic poets of the nineteenth century, Rahi's poetry was subjective, melancholic, nostalgic, introspective, and concerned with the beauty

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of expression and form. It was neither didactic nor propagandistic. In many of his poems he used the form of dialogue in dramatic situations.

From the beginning of his poetic career Rahi has been of the belief that the essence of poetry is ambiguity and multiplicity of meaning achieved through creative use of language. He has chosen the symbolic mode of expression while his contemporaries emphasized on dried communication through common speech to motivate the audience for action in readers. For Rahi poetry is a series of thoughtful meditation which lead to creative delight. One of his best known poems of the period is his swani laanki pyaTh ("Swanalaank Isle") that shows his negation of the propagandist idea of contemporary poetry.

سوٚنہٕ لانکہٕ پیٹھ

از ہنابر ونٹھے پہن اختابہٕ لوٗس
شوخ رنگ شفقٕگ سٕہ کایرٕ نارلوٚت لوٚت سوٗرٕ گو
شامہٕ ژھلاوٗ اکھ اٗکس بنگاوٗ کٕ زُلفن شانہٕ کوٚر
بالہٕ پٚتٕ لوٚت پوٗرٕ تراواں زوٗن کھٕژ
تار کن مستی چھنے ٹارین منزبٕر تھ
ہوٚر کنہٕ وٚتھ آبہٕ ملٕراہ، یوٚر کنہٕ پمپوش گو بیدار ہیوٗ
شالمارٕ ک کوٚچھٕ زٕن خواباہ وُچھان
اکھ دماہٕ تھ لانکہٕ پیٹھ بیہہ، وُچھ تماشاہ میٲنی پاٚٹھ
یورواٚتھ شورشبٕر ک پاٚنی پلٕے کوٚل گژھان
بوز کمہٕ انمانہٕ پٚتٕ ماٚنو ژوپاسے شوقہٕ وٚتٕ جلترنگ

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کیاہ مؤر سوزاہ سرو، داہ پھیو، رتلپا تالہ پیٹھ اسمان تام
تیل بل کنہ درایہ ظاہر بنیا کھ سالانی شکاری
وو، نٹہ کد لس نش چھ ہ نہ ڈنکس اندر پزلان گاش
سونچ کم کم شوقہ ہتی آسن نسیمکی بونہ ہوہن ساوی ہتی
سونچ ژے ئے چھ سونچ وا راگے تلان
سونچ ژے ئے چھ سونچ از باساں ڈیکس پیٹھ زن تلوی تینگل وہان
سونچ کم کم شوقہ ہتی آسن ڈلکی تیمی ماری ہندی انہاری فضہن ماری ہتی
ماری ہتی، پھر کاوی ہتی، مشر اوی ہتی، منساوی ہتی!

سونچ کژو ماہ جینو آسہ یتھ آبس اندر
ژھایہ ہوَل سیماب ہش تن ناوہژ!
سونچ از برو نہہ کتی ہاوسناک دِل
آسہن یتھ زو، نہ گاشس منز چینگ ہاوس کران
کتہو عاشق دِلو ہتھ ڈل ڈہس
آسہ کو رمت بالہ یار س انتظار

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کاٗژ ہن ماجن بٕنٕنین ا ٗوبرُ ک یہِ چھوٗت چھوٗت ر نگ وُچھتھ
آسہے دِل تنبلا وان سالکی وُڈنین ہُند خیال
کاٗتہن شاہنشہن یمہِ شاہِ بُتھ حُسناہ وُچھتھ
آسہن باسان بُرتی دامانہِ ژھُرُ
کاٗژ ہَو دِلدار نظرَ و آسہن
برونہہ یمن نیلین کھیلین پٹھ
لولہِ سان مولناوُی ہتی چھُتی موٗ کھتہِ ہار

کاٗتہن بے باک یارَن آسہن یم کو ہسار
شفقتچ نظراہ کُرِ تھ بخشان یرادن ہُند جلال
کاٗتہو بے باک رو ٗحو آسہِ از تا متھ تہِس تارَ کھ نبس
دوست گُنزرِ تھ زند گی ہنز بیقرارُی باوہِ
ہاے یمہِ سونہِ لانکہِ ہندی مدہوش شامن آسہن
بارہا از برونہہ تہِ آوِرُ ہتی مے ہوی دیوانہِ شاعر واریاہ
ہاے تم نوزُک نوا بُلبل تہِ گیہِ وُڈواہ کُرِ تھ

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شینہٕ بالن تا پھ پیوٚوٕگے گلتھ
سونتہٕ کٔنٕ رنگٕنٕ پوشاکٔنٕ ہرٕد کالن سوٚ رمٕول
یُس اکھاہ گوو، وٚہٕ سُہ گوو، افسوس گوو!
کانہہ جلاہ چھُنہٕ توٚر زانہہ پھیرٕ تھ یوان!

کیاہ یہٕ مرگٕ لک بُپ نیا منٕتہٕ موٚل پرٲٹھ آخرس!
کیاہ یہٕ یمہٕ نایور ازٕ پھیرٕ تھ ہنٕے!
کیاہ یہٕ وُچھ نا دُنیٖہٕ گاشی پتولا کن زانہہ!
کیلھٕ مے بنہٕ نا زانہہ یہٕ تھ سونہٕ لانکہٕ پینٹھ شامن بیہٕن!
موتہٕ کِس پنجرس چھنا اڈٗوٚڑھ تہٕ روزاں دٲرزانہہ!
ہائے! اتھ سنگٕنٕ قلالیس سپدٕ ناوٚلی وٚلی شگاف!
وائے کر گڑھِ اتھ طلسماتس نٔنٕیر!
پاٚڈٕ کنٕی ہندی پاٚٹھی کر گڑھِ
موت پنٕنی کارسازی منزاسپر!
زندگانی سپدٕ کر حاصِل کمال!
گرچھُ انسانس بنٕن وونٕی لازوال!

(Nav Rozi Sabaa 17-20)

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Tr. Swanalaank Isle

The Sun is set a little earlier today
the pine-wood blaze like crimson twilight is extinguished.
The dusky shadows
like Bengali hair curls get intertwined.
The moon climbs languidly from behind the cliffs,
stars look with drowsy eyes.
A wave rises there and here, a lotus sprouts out.
The Shalimar hill is dreaming deep.
Come, have a little rest here and watch
the mesmerizing spectacle.
All the hubbub of the city gets bedumbed here.
Hark! the frogs start their symphony in unison all around.
Melody arising from the nether- world
fills up the ambience.
There, a pranky boat starts moving from Telbal;
there those lights in that house-boat
near WonTakadal are still not put out.

Reflect, how many dreamy lovers
might have been put to sleep by the breeze of the Nassem Garden!
Think, for I myself go crazy with such thoughts, think,
for such thoughts I feel as burning embers in my brain.
Think of the numberless lovers
slain by this unravished spectacle of the Dal lake,
maddened, slain, and sunk into oblivion.
How many beautiful virgins
may have washed their silvery bodies
in crystalline waters behind the shady copses.
Think how many thirsty lovers,
while boating in moonlit waters
may have yearned for a vintage.
Think, how many lovers
may have waited for their love there on those misty banks.
Many mothers and sisters may have yearned

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for colourful new hairdresses.
Seeing this munificence, many emperors
may have felt themselves poor.
Numerous lovers of beauty may have desired
for the shimmering pearl necklaces
of water drops rolling on the spread green leaves afloat.

Myriad brave men may have got their resolves strengthened
by the compassionate sight of these mountains.
Making this starlit sky their friend,
countless courageous souls
may have narrated their tale of relentless life to them.

Many a poet like me may have got enthralled
by this enchanting dusk of the Dal.
Alas, all those melodious nightingales
soared away never to return.

The heat of the sun melts the avalanches on the summits.
The autumnal winds
make all motley flowers fade away.
Once left this scene, alas! one is left for ever.
No bird comes back once fled.

What! Shall this deluge of death root out me too?
Shall I never be back to this place again?
Shall I never find one more privilege
to saunter on this isle?

Is there no window of the cage of death ajar?
Oh, I wish the bastion of death crumbled down!
Oh when shall this mystery get unravelled!
When shall death, like a silk-worm,
get snared in its own cocoon?
When shall life find victory?
When shall man become immortal?

(Tr. Shauq)

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The poem cited above is an echo of many of the poems of the nineteenth century English poems like Wordsworth's 'Lines Written on Tintern Abbey', Coleridge's 'Ode on Dejection' Keats' 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' and 'Ode to the Nightingale, Shelley's 'Ode to the West Wind' and many more. Rahi's poem "On the Isle of Swanalaank" may be considered a parallel to Shelley's famous poem 'Stanzas Written in Dejection':

The Sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright.
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple moon's transparent might.
The breath of the moist earth is light
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight
The winds, the birds, the Ocean –floods;
The city's voice itself is soft, like Solitude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple seaweeds strewn;
I see the waves upon the shore
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown;
I sit upon the sands alone; the lightning of the Moontide
Ocean
Is flashing around me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion
How sweet! Did any heart now share in my emotion?

Alas, I have neither hope nor health
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content surpassing wealth
The sage in meditation found.
And walked with inward glory crowned;
Nor fame nor power nor love nor leisure____
Others I see whom these surround,
Smiling they live and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.
Yet nor despair itself is mild.

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Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne and yet must bear
Till death like Sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grows cold, and hears the Sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I, when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with its untimely moan____
They might lament, ____ for I am one
Whom men love not, and yet regret:
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

(Palgrave 250)

Shelley's poem begins with the description of cheerful natural landscape near Naples. The backdrop is the ocean and small islands are surrounded by dancing waves. Time is evening and the moon is shining bright that reddens the snow-capped mountains. The poet's spirit elated to feel the breath of the earth warm. The unfathomed bottom of the ocean is verdant with seaweeds. Air is filled with the melodies of birds' songs. Nature's charms are plentiful that are ready to delight an awakened consciousness. In the next two stanzas the poet draws a contrast of his enfeebled melancholic soul with the ecstatic state of Nature. He has 'nor hope nor health' to have a communion with nature. His dejection is also because of his deprivation while people have got everything to make their life pleasant. He has a longing for death. He feels death alone can liberate him from the crushing burden of cares.

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Rahi's poem also draws a parallel between his inner state of mind and the enthralling surroundings. Instead of ocean, there a beautiful lake spread all around him. The moonshine washes everything from the snow-capped mountain cliffs to the grooves of willows, poplars and chinars. His ecstatic mind is in perfect harmony with the bountiful nature. He is immediately conscious of his brief life span and the never ending beauty of nature. He grows melancholic when he remembers that many a poet of the past might have visited the isle and got absorbed in the same munificence of beauty. They too have sung of its glory and got acclaim for their verses. All of sudden he remembers his own death that will sever his friendly relation with the isle and be forgotten with time. He vainly wishes that man's will to be cold vanquish all-effacing death.

Rahi's poem is therefore different from the dejection poems in the sense that, in keeping with the optimistic mood of the times, he hopes for the final victory of life over death.

The poem, though obviously romantic in being melancholic, nostalgic and sensuous, is symbolic in the sense that the Swanalaank Isle in itself becomes a symbol of mortal world where things come and go and nothing is abiding. The rising moon, the cliffs, the lonely boat, the blossoming lotus flower, the pleasure mongers in the houseboat, everything around the awakened consciousness of the poet becomes a voice of his inner state of mind and thus assumes meaning with reference to him as well as life in general.

Written in his youth, Rahi's poem is naturally an affirmation of life and fear of death. The obsessive thoughts about death are because of the poet's passionate and sensuous bonds with nature. The lake, the surrounding mountain, the blue sky, all and everything shall remain there. But appearance of individual flowers, rise and fall of tides and sailing boat remind the poet that everything is short lived and fast changing;

The heat of the sun melts the avalanches on the summits.

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The autumnal winds
make all motley flowers fade away.
Once left this scene, alas! one is left for ever.
No bird comes back once fled.

What! Shall this deluge of death root out me too?
Shall I never be back to this place again?
Shall I never find one more privilege
to saunter on this isle?

We may compare the above lines with this small poem of John Keats, titled: 'When I have Fears that I may Cease to be'.

When I have Fears that I may Cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teening brain.
Before high piled books, in charactery,
Hold like rich garners the full ripened grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance,
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the fairy power
Of unreflecting love – then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

(Cook 168-169)

Keats' poem expresses the poet's foreboding of early death. He is sad because he fees that death will deprive him of time to realize his creative faculties. He compares himself with a garner who desires to gather ripened grain. He aspires to achieve fame like the great poets of the past, but he is immediately conscious of the impending death before his maturity. He feels melancholic and lonely. In his despondence he feels love and fame getting reduced to nothingness.

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The two poems are similar in their melancholic tone and approach to life. Every second of life ought to be purposeful because it is never to come back again and, therefore, is an opportunity to have its full benefit. All the transitory colours, tastes and forms assume significance for the awakened consciousness of "being there" under the dread of death. The objects of immediate perception become symbols of the rise and fall of the emotions and longings. The poem 'Isle of Swanalaank' embodies Rahi's remarkable use of language reflecting on life in the shadow of death. The poet is free of limitations of time and space and thus untouched by vague political ideas with which his contemporaries struggled.

This poem was a turning point in Rahi's style. He abandoned his direct statement-like expression and launched in the symbolic mode. Seeing the drama of the external world within his soul, he searches for corresponding symbols to carry the weight of meaning. No object of Nature in itself has a meaning, unless the poet finds in it some significance at the subjective level which he elevates to objectify.

Meanwhile, Rahi was deeply influenced by English symbolist poets, like Swinburne, W.B. Yeats, and T.S. Eliot and through them by the theory and practice of symbolism. As a symbolist he considers words much more than signs. Every poet, in order to be genuinely creative, has to write evocatively and ritualistically and this entails his being grounded in his native traditions. Words to Rahman Rahi are a vehicle that transports his imagination into an ideal world. He believed that originality in expression and meaning is possible only when the poet remains in touch with the essential music and mysterious sense of words that normally get blurred by common usage. Stephane Mallarme (French poet and critic) says:

> Poetry is the expression by means of human language restored to its essential rhythm, of the mysterious sense of the aspects of existence: it endows our sojourn with authenticity and constitutes the sole spiritual task.
>
> (Wimsatt and Brooks 593)

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Rahi's symbolic technique can best be understood with reference to his poem on Kashmiri language itself. The poem Jalvi ti Zaboor (1966) ("Revelations and the Psalms") hints to his faith that language is an inexhaustible source of revelations, the ocean of meanings for a poet to explore. The amorphous linguistic competence in a poet put to optimum use to concretize his inner feelings.

In this poem Rahi reflects on the primeval silence of mind before there was language. It is language that provides him the tools of perception, concept-making and imparting mythical meaning to the things observed. Without language a poet's creativity is an impossibility as the harmony and music in all things of this universe are embedded in linguistic construction that comes to the poet only through his mother tongue.

جلوہ تہٕ زبور

گٔنہٕ ساعتہٕ بہ چھس سوچان ہر گاہ
اُسی آسہٕوے نہ سمکھی متز زانہہ
مینہٕ آسہٕے نہ اَچھو کھورنو
کیہٕ وا اَنجہٕ ہُنٛد دو کھ سو کھ تمبلیو مُت
ژٕہتہٕ آہتھیم نہٕ دِوِ تھی شبدو
مینہٕ مُر ژٕ بخشمت ز کھمکی پھوٚر
دٕہٕ دَم ما گوٚ ہھم تھ سپٚس
ا نوش ما شٕٹھہم مے اُچھنے منز
وٚنلے مأسہٕ ہٕیم با سن بل
سو چس مے اکلأت ماپھرِ ہٕیم

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رنگ ژھٹنے ماہرِ ہٕیم سوسن
کزت کرنے ماہرِ ہٕیم کوثر
گس زرِ زرتھوِ ہٕیم کچ کوہہ تال
کم چھوٗ پرچھوٗ پر کرِ ہٕیم کھنہٕ بندوٗتھ
آکارس برژھ ہن سوٗ برٕ صدا
موسیٰ مرِ ہے دیدارِ وزٕے
ہے کاشٕر کٕ زٕوٗ کمٕے چھنے چانی دزٕے
ژٕے میانٕی خبر ژٕے میانٕی نظر
ژٕے میانٕہٕ شعور چ سونٕدٕی زٕژ
ژٕے میانٕہٕ ضمیر چ مٕژ سارنگ
ژٕے پتنے چھنے کاچ زا یچ ملون
گلِ نخچس تاپلوٗ زٕہٕند چھٕپہٕ
تھنہٕ پیوس تہٕ پرٕ ژکنہٕ وان گیم
بیزانس زانی زان گیم
دودِ بب دِ تھ کیوٗ وتھم ہوٗڈ کلیو
کنہٕ دور للو، تھس منز لس منز
گاش آوتہٕ گرٕی تھٕیم پانٕس پھیٹی
دوہ لوٗ س تہٕ پٕرٕی ن کھونہٕ دٕیتھس
رنگہٕ پٕند رس رکس رکن تے کھارِ تھ
وٗڈٕ پرٕ نگن پیٹھ پرواز تٲم

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نٹی سارِ ژنے مالنز دود گیوٗ تھ
اُش وانِے اندری ناگ وٗنیے
کھورِ پٹھلی نیلہِ چھلی تھم یارِ بلی
زٗنہِ دیدار س زن داغ ژلی
وونِدبوٗر تھم زوف ونِہِ کورِنن ہُند
لیہِ او نتھ س درد نین پھرِ وِتھ
گاہ اُنزکِ نین کارِ تھزر کو نچھتھ
گاہ من رنز نوٗ تھ وَنہارِنن
گاہ گامہِ گنبڈ تھ ڈش استانن
گاہ شہرِ اُنتھ زنو طوفانن
کمہِ آ گروانِہِ یہِ پھوٗر چھوٗ لتھم

منہِ امرِتھ زنو زمزم دیُت تھم
پوٗت زوٗ نہِ چھُ وٗ تھمُت چوٹے موٗت
لوٗت پاٗٹھین ژھوٗ پہِ آواز گران
اسہِ نبض نبض تاں ہم حرکت
یہِ چھُ ماجہِ تہِ گوٗبرس سرِ بوٗت

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ژٕے ٮتٕے چھےٚ یٚژ کاچھ یارَز

دِلہٕ دُبرارَے وُٹھ پھسر ارَے

بیٚتہٕ یورتٕے چھےٚ چھےٚ چانٛی یژھ پژھ

بیٚتہٕ یورتہٕ ژھایہٕ تہٕ گرایہٕ وچھے

بیٚتہٕ یورسگوِ زِ میانٛی سخن

یٚنہٕ اَتھ یارٚز کانہہ پھیرٕ پٚیم

رُدٕ پھیرِ س ہانگنٛ دورٕ پٚیم

بہٚتہٕ بادم کُجہٕ اڈٕ پھوٚٹ بامُن

ژتہٕ تاپہٕ مولہٕ مژ سونتہٕ رنگاہ

یٚنہٕ ژھیٚپہٕ ژلہم سیکہٕ لئین رلہم

پمپوشس واولُناہ تھلہٕ ہم

یٚنہٕ گانگلہٕ کانہہ کتہٕ پروت کری

دودِ موصُم معنہٕ یتیم گرژھن

ژھوپہٕ چانٛیٚ اَندر رٚووٹ الہامس

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لیہٕ چانہٕ بہٕ لولہٕ زبو ٚ رگنیو ان
ہے کاشر ٚ زنو ٚ کٔمٕ چھنے چانی دٕر ے
ژ ے میانٕ خبر، ژ ے میانٕ نظر

ژ ے میانہٕ شعور چ سونہٕ لکٕ ژ ژ
ژ ے میانہٕ ضمیر چ مٕژ سار نگ

(Siyah Ruudi Jaryan Manz 13)

Tr.

Revelation and the Psalms

Many a time I tend to think,
if we were not met,
if I had not laboured to express
the joys and sorrows of my mute heart,
and you, with your divine words,
had not imparted this caly-form
the sparks of flint-stone,
a stifling smoke would have filled my bosom,
tears frozen in my eyes,
smog encircled my perception,
formlessness entrapped my cognition,
irises withered away
before giving off their fragrance,
the pigeon died without a cry;

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these silent summits
kept me craving,
the clogged Vyath remained writhing,
misty sounds enwrapped the forms;
Moses died without a revelation.

O my Kashmiri tongue, I swear by you,
you alone are my gnosis, you alone my sight,
you alone are a rainbow-like gleam to me,
you alone are the harp of my conscience.

In body and soul we stand related.
You are a touch of morning ray
to the bud of garden about to sprout.
When born, I heard you, auguring good,
I, unenlightened, got awareness from you.
While sucking milk from the breasts of my mother,
you sang me lullabies and many a rhyme;
you sang me melodious cradle songs;
when morning rose, light I felt tassled,
with fall of the dusk you put me in lap of nymphs,
with the sweet squeaking of the motley spinning wheel,
you made me soar in the sky on the flying-discs;
at the waterhole you sang me your rueful lays.

You and I are long-lasting friends,
our hearts throb in unison
our lips whisper in full accord.
Unflinching is my faith in you,
always I shall have trust in you,
and fondly keep you watching with hope.
My soul shall remain thirsty for you,
so always keep watering my verse,
and never falter in friendship, I beseech.
May the oyster never keep distance
from the little rain drop to produce a pearl.
A half bloomed almond bud I am,
and you a gale of spring tested by sunlight.

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Never abandon me, be not lost in sand,
never be a whirlwind to make the lotus shrivel.
May no one render you dumb again,
to leave our babes orphaned for meaning.

Your silence inhibits all my inspiration,
It is my being in tune with you
that I sing my sweet psalms hollowed.
O Kashmiri tongue, my mother you are,
I swear by you, for you are my vision,
you are my awareness. You alone
rainbow-glimpses of my consciousness,
You alone are the lyre of my conscience.

(Tr. Shauq)

In this poem, we see how Rahi as a typical symbolist, gradually constructs the Kashmiri language as a symbol of "Kashmiriyat" identity of Kashmir because the language represents all the vicissitudes of Kashmiri people. The symbol "Kashmiriyat" communicates continuity of a living speech-community that has been threatened to extinction many a time in the course of history. The language stood like a solid rock defending the speech community and providing a solid base for their cultural mores, ethical values and aesthetic tastes.

The very title of the poem Jalvi ti Zabuur ("Revelations and the Psalms") symbolically depicts the existing language as a world of infinite possibilities of expressions. It turns the poet's expression into prophetic revelations. The poem is a good example of Rahi's myth-making. The poet's mother tongue is presented as a prototype mother that fondly nourishes the poet's imagination, the poet being her darling son. The language is personified as a primeval repository of all individual as well as collective dreams, aspirations, deprivations and strengths. The son, in his gratitude, resolves to defend her piety and ensure her continuity.

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This poem (1966), though seemingly sentimental, reveals Rahman Rahi's total commitment to his language and through language to his people and their traditions and cultural mores. G.R. Malik comments on the permanent value of the poem:

> Apparently Rahi's ode to the Kashmiri language, Jalveh te Zaboor, in fact, is a mirror which reflects the image of the poet in all its essentials and goes beyond this to comprehend the larger issues of language and creativity. Language, for any user of it, gives tongue to his feelings and emotions which would otherwise remain pent up. In the hands of a creative artist, it becomes an instrument of release, deliverance and salvation in a higher degree. Rahi suggests that language teaches us how to think and feel right from the moment we are born, through cradle songs, lullabies, folk songs, rouf, wanawun and all else. Martin Heidegger said: "Man acts as if he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact language remains the master of man."
>
> Modern Deconstructionists have taken this position to its extreme, blotting the user of language totally out of existence. Rahi remains wedded to the logocentric view of language and its humanistic infrastructure. He would modify Heidegger to say that language is not the master but the maker of man, a mother to a darling babe (if the mother suckles, the child sucks) and I think the modification is not only befitting to a sensitive poet's mode of thinking but also philosophically more accurate.
>
> The poem also shows how Rahi's original genius is in harmony with his tradition enshrined in Kashmiri language, folk-lore, folk-singing, Lal Ded, Habba Khatoon, Mahmud Ghami, Rasul Mir – all these, as vital components of the tradition, are interwoven into the fabric of Kashmiri language and our poet is integrally related to it both consciously and unconsciously. This authenticates his originality for it is only an original genius which can grasp the tradition and enter into a meaningful relationship with it. Such a person alone can contribute creative-

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ly to the enrichment of language and Rahi's own achievement is a fair testimony to this.

(173-75)

Rahman Rahi's poetry is deeply rooted in the oriental tradition of poetry as he was directly under the influence of great Persian poets like Hafiz Sheerazi, Bedil, Ghani Kashmiri and is also a great admirer of the great Indian poet Mirza Ghalib. Yet the poems of his earlier phase at the same time show visible influence from many English poets like John Milton, William Blake, Robert Browning, William Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge, P.B.Shelley, Lord Byron and John Keats. In many of his poems we easily trace stray metaphors, similes, and even situations that have direct correspondence to the poems of the English poets. We understand that his creative genius that he produces an admirable synthesis of diverse influences. A poem Rahi had written in the fifties of the twentieth century is a testimony.

ویشأ کھی تہٕ رفگر

سونتہٕ کالاہ آو، بالن شانہٕ دو گنے، پوش پھلو
آسمانس آنہٕ پوٹ گو، خوش ہواون نافہٕ باگر عالمس
ویر وارَن منز چھِ بولان کو کلہٕ، یاہو، دم دِوان
آفتابن ہو دمو کھینبر زلومس کھاسکہٕ بُرُ
پنگتھٕ اکھ آیہٕ گٹی جن ہنز فضاوٕ زناونے
آیہٕ پرسکی پاٹھی بنیہٕ ویشأ کھی پرانین ہاوسن دُب دُب کران

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ڈیڈی ازہژ رن نشاطس مارِ ژھشہ از شاکہ مارچ آبشار
دوستہ کارن لوگ نوورَخ، کوچوانن ٹانگہ کوڈ
وہ اگر راتک جمعہ أزی آسہے!
وہ یمن فردن چھ کا تیاہ زٹھی تے گوڈ نقشہ تراواں نقشہ گُری
واے تھ پأس چھ کھر آمت ژوپأری
ہژ نہ تامت وَتھ چھے زن از راُوہژ
اونگچہ ٹینڈین درایہ پژ پاراہ کُرِ تھ

O

دو رِثل کُمک تام شُری کریکہ نادہیو
قأدرس میانس یماکنڈ کأسہ کل
تنبہ لوٗ کھ ماتمس موصوم دِل

دراوماوجہ زاد کانہہ نوو بوٹ لأ گتھ سأنی کنی
یار باشن کأسہ مادت موہنو س اتھ باجہ ستی
آوما کانہہ بأنز گرا کس کأسہ وَتھرن سار نے
دراوما کانہہ واز پھیکہ ہوٗنی باپنہ ترأوِ تھ گاٹھ پیٹھ

O

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بُلبُلا کیاہ دو، رِروزِ تھ چھُکھ وُ چھان
اکھ دماہ تھ دارِ پیٹھ بیہہ بول بوشاہ بوزِ ناو
وارِ وَن شیچھ رنگ کیتھ رنوٹمت چھُ از چانیو گلو
شبنمن ماتھاوہژ کا نہہ پوشہِ تھُر وِ نہِ تریشہِ ہُژ ؟

O

بانبریو کھاہ؟ ژیر کیاہ گوے؟ بیہہ ہناہ ، دُکھ کیاہ سپُد ؟
وِنی کڈ کھ واشاہ پکھن اسمأزِ پکھ سألاہ کُرِ تھ
وائے بتیہِ وُد آسہا بُلبُل تہِ منیتہِ وُ پھ آسہے !
وائے منیتہِ وُد آسہے مو کجار ہیُو !
وائے بتنے آسہا قرضن نظر بند تھووُمت !
ہالس پیٹھ بہتھ کس ترادِ ہے شوقس غمچ زنجورِ نألی ؟

(nav roozi sabaa 23-25)

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Tr.

Spring Revellers and the Embroiders

Spring come, the mountains in ecstasy, and all in bloom,
The sky turned into a mirror, and
breeze spreads its musk throughout the world.

In yonder willow grooves, the doves sing and the cuckoos
koo,
The sun shows its face and the narcissus fills up its goblets,
A swarm of swallows comes to awaken the space,
And the spring-revellers come with their throbbing hearts.
Today they are to re-open the gate of Nishat garden,
as they did last year, and the cascades
of the Shalimar garden shall gush forth,
The artisan dolls himself up by his new dress
and the tonga-driver starts his tonga.

O if yesterday's Friday were today!
Oh, why the print-makers mark the cloth so densely!
Oh, why the silken thread is knotted and skeined,
The needles, too, have lost their direction,
that they pierce the finger tips.

Far away some child begins crying,
Perhaps my own Qadir is being seduced
by other children of the neighbours,
they may have enticed his innocent soul.
May be some son of the rich has walked past our house,
May be some boy of an affluent family
accompanied by his servant
bears a mouth-organ in his hand.
May be some boat-rover is there
to make a cushion for his visitors.
May be the cook has carried a load of utensils to the river-
side.

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O Bulbul! Why do you gaze at me from a distance?
Sit a while at the sill of my window and sing a little for me too,
Tell me what colour is worn by your flowers,
Is there no flower-bush left thirsty by the morning dew?

Why be you in haste? Why do you feel you are lat e?
Sit a while at the sill. What time is it now?
Anon you shall take a flight and soar high in the sky.

Oh, I, too, were a bird, I, too, had wings to fly!
Oh, I, too, had my leisure time!
Oh I were not burdened by debts!
Why should one remain confined
to this training centre
with all desires chained?

(Tr. Shauq)

In this poem, there is a conflict between physical limitation and spiritual urge for freedom. The central character (the speaker) in the poem is a peculiar Kashmiri artisan who, because of his poverty, is confined to the working place while it is the season of frolicking, revelry and wild abandon. The character soliloquises and gives vent to his longings for leisure so that he too could have his share of joys of Spring. The toiling embroiderer, who remains confined to his unpleasant cell in order to eke out his living, symbolizes slavery, while the Bulbul soaring freely in air, stands as a symbol of unquenching longing for freedom. The contrast evokes poignant desire for breaking all the bonds of subjugation. The song-bird "bulbul", like the nightingale of John Keats, is the messenger of the plentiful beauty of spring and a symbol of freedom. We are reminded of these lines from "Ode to a Nightingale":

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Fade away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves, hast never known.
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrows
And leaden eyed despairs,
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

(Cook 286)

However, Rahman Rahi's poetic skill welds diverse borrowings into the text of his poem that is in consonance with the general tempo of Kashmiri poetry of the fifties of the twentieth century when all poets had to make the working class the central subject of all their art. By imbibing diverse influences from the native poets, Persian mystic poets and the English romantic poets and by choosing the technique of Symbolism, Rahman Rahi evolves his own distinct style. About Rahi's individual style, Malik writes:

> Powerful creative imagination, amplitude and variety define Rahi's greatness as a poet. One of the most important characteristics of creative imagination is that even as it soars to heights, delves into depths and flies in diverse directions, its feet are firmly rooted in the ground. Its method is, therefore, not abstraction but concretion. Rahi's creative imagination exhibits a marvellous elasticity, empathy and an extraordinary capability of fusing diverse elements into unified wholes and grasping experience through vivid and concrete images. His imagery is sensuous to the hilt and retains its sensuous vigour in all stages of his evolution as an artist. At times his sensual images recall to mind John Keats:

Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,

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Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath
And so live ever - or else swoon to death.

(172-73)

Rahi's images more often pass beyond the sensuous and penetrate into deeper levels of consciousness and gain the status of symbols. The most recurrent of these images seem to be binary opposites. For example, darkness and light, the gnawing worm and the dove. Symbolism of Rahi sometimes reaches the complexity of Yeats's symbolism. Unique symbolic mode of Rahi may be called "Rahiesque". (Malik 172-3)

Rahi's study of varied literatures and the changes in his perspective of life have brought modifications in his style. His readings of the great English Romantics, his fascination with Milton's allusions, his admiration for the twentieth century English poets, like Hopkins, Yeats, Eliot, Frost and others motivated him in creating a style of his own. He became an ardent admirer of all those English poets who under the influence of French Symbolists wished to liberate poetry from the profuseness of words and subservience to music. They tried to get rid of clichéd metaphors of Georgian poetry that assigned personal feeling in the objects of nature. The symbolists believe that the merit and individuality of a genuine poet comes into existence by the poet's craft of breaking the old relations between words, using new and unexpected combinations in such a way that the reader elicits newer meanings. The symbolists believe in the creative use of words, or what may be called conscious effort to produce as much of concretion of the concept through external objects that they became true representatives of the subjective experience or thought. Mere shallow statements about the experience are avoided by them.

The symbolists, thus, advocate rigorous editing of the text so

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that all superfluous details are avoided and the words become a medium of representing an object in its dimensions. Every object is seen and depicted with relation to other objects in such a way that it becomes a word-picture with unexpected relations and unexpected meaning and sometimes with shocking revelations. Here is Mallarme's famous description of the poet's craft of creating fresh symbols: "It is the perfect handling of the mystery that constitutes the symbol: to evoke an object little by little in order to show a state of mind or inversely to choose an object and to disengage from it a state of mind by a series of unriddlings. (Wimsatt and Brooks 592)

Rahman Rahi has already a model of this kind of poetry in his own language that is the vaakh of a fourteenth-century Kashmiri poetess Lal Dyad. However, Rahman Rahi gave up the external music and the rules of syntax so that the poem evolved with a music of its own, not prescribed by the traditional prosody. He also took inspiration from the experiments of prose-poem that had acquired popularity by the mid of the twentieth century English poetry. A prose-poem is supposed to be unique in its own rhythm, but not conforming to any metrical pattern established in the language. The rhythm has to follow the rhythm of the common speech and has to remain faithful to the rise and fall of the emotional component and requirements of producing a pure word-picture. In other words, the word-picture has to become a true equivalent of the intense emotion that the poet wants to convey. For instance, Rahman Rahi's poem "A Chicory Pappus" shows his method of objectifying emotion. The layers of meaning embedded in a given object are unravelled in such a way that the object is full of suggestion and speaks for itself. The title of the poem is handyi fanuus (Chicory Pappus). The flower of the herb produces a round tuft of winged seeds that are dispersed even by a slight motion of wind.

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ہرندِ فانوس

یُتھ نہ ہَدہ کھلا یہ ہم
سخت اُویل مُنسے
تیوت اُویل زِ
(رنگ
برنین مُھمہ بلشن اُڈ کرد
شکل
اکھتا یہ ڈُلو، م
نیپری
پاڈ مھیو، ہ، شینہ تھوٗ ساہ
مُنر طلہ بأتی حار تھ
کاینا یک ژھوٗپ روپ وآرث)
میژ مھوٗس، رود ود ھس، تا یہ کھوٗس
بولہ بوزم تہ جین ہُند شور شور
مالہ تیتا لُرتہ اسمان وُمھم

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دوہلہ ماسیوم زِ پرتھ کتھ گژھ بر
راتھ کیت پیوم نہ ژیتہ
آس کمہ دیشہ ، گژھن کوت پیٹھ منٹھم

اکھ نظر پان وچھویوم
مگر!
تتھ نہ بوھد کھ لایہ ہم
سخت اُویل منٹھ
تیوت اُویل زِ.....

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Tr.

A Chicory Pappus

Do not blow at me,
I am fragile,
so fragile that
(colour:
Flour-dust on lustrous filaments of cotton,
form,
rounded Sun;
outwardly,
a tassel or a snow flake,
inwardly,
craft of magical wonder,
a mute heir of the cosmos).

Sprouted from soil,
thrived in torrents,
and sprung by sunlight,
many a warble I heard
and heard the music of creeks,
the summit I saw and I saw the skies.
In daytime I felt I shall unravel all the secrets,
in night-time, I did not even remember,
whence I came, and where to go,
in one glance I saw my own self.
But!
Do not blow at me,
I am fragile,
so fragile that...

(Shauq 2007, 121)

In "A Chicory Pappus" the poet presents a seed-head of an ordinary wild flower in highly intensified form. The structure of the

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thalamus with its winged seeds on its top is described in minute detail in a poetic way. These details add to its symbolic existence rather than making it an object for analysis. It is rounded like the mid-day sun in its full circle. When the pappus begins to speak of its coming into existence, the symbol begins to unfold its meaning and the ambiguity is removed. It becomes the symbol of human condition itself. It grows from clay; it witnesses the whole circle of time: sunrise, mid-day brightness, dusk and then night. In all these external phenomena, the pappus speaks of its varying moods. With the appearance of the sun, it begins to hear sweet music of water and that of birds and thus becomes jubilant for having come into existence. This excitement of childhood is just hinted at, not declared. In broad daylight the pappus expresses its optimism of maturity that it could know all and get anything that it desired. It is again a human condition as man has an insatiable desire for knowledge and possession. But the more he knows, the more he knows that he knows nothing. This paradox of man's knowledge is beautifully expressed through the voice of a delicate and short lived thing of nature, so fragile that even a slight breeze can annihilate it. Then comes the gloom of night and the pappus, like a recluse mystic philosopher questions its coming into existence "whence I came and where to go? / in one glance I saw myself." The symbolic meaning of the poem is, thus, revealed by relating the pappus to human condition in this world.

Rahman Rahi wrote several poems in which the symbolic mode is predominant, but in every poem profusion of metaphors and similes goes against the symbolic method of avoiding details. The poet also uses plenty of adjectives that become self-explanatory and, as such, go against the use of ambiguity as a tool and medium of symbolic suggestivity. Here for instance is one of his famous poems, titled "pay chhu zulmati vuzaan".

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پے چھُ ظُلماتہٕ وُزان

راتھ اڈنیٚندرِ گُژھتھ ژھیوٚنمے خیالن پن ہیُو
پاُزا کھ ذیٚہنچہٕ وَن ژھایہٕ اندرٕ کرٕ پریزنوٗوم
تونتہٕ تس اوس تتھے پاُٹھی وُہاں کوتر رَتھ
بالہٕ تیتھاُکی چھنیٚے تیرِ دِنان فِضہس منز

شانہٕ پیٚٹھی کارٕ پھرِم ، سوٚن تہٕ سیاہ چاہ ڈیوٚنٹھُم
ڈوٗکھ ژیٚنس ستی دِتُم ، ماگ شروٚپُم منز سپنس
وُٹھ ہوٚ کھِم ، دارِ نیٚپرٕ کی اُس گژھاں پھسرارٕے
شیٚنہٕ تھوٚسی اُسی ژھیٚپن جاے سراں دَرزن منز
صوٚندقہٕ پُتی کھُژ نہٕ گگر کھریٚژتہٕ گنجپنس کُن
وِنگی جہٕ پیٚٹھ پھیٚر نہٕ بدل اوس اویزاں بیوراہ
اُچھ مُرَن دِتھمے لمیوٚ ولیفہٕ سرد شاوٗ پیٚٹھی
گراے لُچ کانگرِ ہندریوم کوٚوَق سوٗر کھورَن
اُتھی اندر گوم کنن راتہٕ موٚ ہگی موٗ دوٗ ہوٗ

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دِل اکر ساتھ مٕدِیہ ہے، بہ وَدَن کر یکھ دِمہ ہا
نا گہاں ماد مگر پیوم پنُن لخت جگر
کالہ بٕچھو وہ نش شوقہ، کتھن کن دٲرتھ
وٚادِ بستر ہٲنکنہ کس حال سپٕد، ماد یو مس
ٹھٕر مگر یو، زاڈے کتھ تہٕ نیٚندر ٹھیس.....
بو وَلاہ مٕیو بہ وو تھس، بجلیہ بادر تووم
بالہ مٕیڈ راہ مٕیو وٚچھم وٚرنہ روس اند کن لوٗ گٲت
نیٚندرِ منز مس تہٕ وٚتھن مشلہ بٕرتٕ ٹوری چھو لاں
منز ڈیکس عرقہ چھیو راہ تاز طلوع سپٕد یو مٲت
ظاہِ اادوس وچھان خابٕی سو ماقی أڈ کتھ
ظاہِ اادوس مدکھتہ چھو وَلاہ ہٲنکنہ مٕری مٕری زامٲت

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Tr.

Inklings from the Dark

Yesternight my sleep driven off and the thread of my fancies slit,
I identified an eagle in the wild shadow of my mind:
On its beak did smoulder in the same old fashion, the blood of the dove.
Whose feathers were shed by hilltops into the atmosphere?
Turning my head on the pillow, I sighted a deep, dark chasm
And rose and leaned my back against the wall,
With the cool of the winter in the marrow of my breast.
My lips got dry as whisperings reached me from outside the window.
The snowflakes were sailing into the shelter of the crevices.
Not a mouse did creep from under the box to the store-cabinet.
In place of my upper garment, a cat hung by the hanger.
Rubbing my eyes, I tried to pull the quilt upto my cold back,
But O, the kangri shook and the cold, untimely ashes touched my feet.
While the owl hooted outside, "O, woe to you, O woe!"
Fain would I have raised a cry of lament had my heart stood by me.
Suddenly I called to my mind my darling son,
How rapidly did he listen to my bed-time tale last night
When I told him of the agony of the oyster in her travails!
But he heard only a part of the tale when sleep overtook him.
I rose, like a moonstruck man, and switched on the light,
And found him lying by the wall like a mushroom on the mount.
In deep slumber, with fragrant blossoms blooming on his lips,

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And a drop of sweat, dawned afresh, playing on his brow.
Perchance he was dreaming the remaining part of the tale!
Perchance the Oyster had laboured forth a pearl!

(Malik 50)

The setting of the poem, though woven of the images drawn from immediate surroundings the dramatic personae is easily identifiable with the poet. The poem reminds us of S.T.Coleridge's poem "Frost at Midnight" in which a similar extraordinary feeling of dread of the adult is depicted. Here is an excerpt from Coleridge's poem:

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Frost at Midnight

The frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud____ and bark, again! Loud as before,
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest.
Have left me to solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings: save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'is calm indeed! So calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. See, hill and wood,
With all numberless goings on of life,
Inaudible as dreams! The thin blue flame
Lies on my low burnt fire, and quivers not;
Only that film, which flutters there, the soul unquiet thing....

(Baumgaertner 206)

In the last section of the poem, the narrator in a state of anguish becomes conscious of his baby that sleeps calmly beside him.

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought!
My Babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
And in far other scenes! ...

(Baumgaertner 206)

Rahi's poem "Inkling from the Dark" seems to be an adaptation of Coleridge's poem "Frost at Midnight". The setting, the anguish and hopes of the central character, the dread of the unknown, and use of figurative language are strikingly similar. However, Rahi has added his optimism in the last two lines: "Perchance he was dream-

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ing the remaining part of the tale! / Perchance the Oyster had laboured forth a pearl".

Rahi's poem "pay chhu zulmaati vuzan" is a symbolic expression of individual's existential dread. The speaker of the poem is conscious of his loneliness. The sense of loneliness is made more horrifying by giving the details of the sights and sounds of a frosty midnight. The ambience, a peculiarly Kashmiri house, is depicted as a place full of mystery. The speaker has a vision of a hawk that has killed some dove and is spreading the plumage of the prey in air. The speaker wakes up and feels the chill of wintry night deep in his marrow. He finds his 'kangri' (a Kashmiri fire pot contained in a wicker basket) without fire. His fright is increased by the sight of his garment hanging from the rope. The momentary state of dread is over when he is suddenly conscious of his dear baby in deep slumber beside him. He feels as if the baby is dreaming the unheard part of the tale that he had narrated to the baby before going to sleep.

Rahman Rahi came under the influence of Symbolism in 1960s when he studied modern English poets and critics. The Symbolist movement started with the poetry of Baudelaire, and then made inroads into French through Paul Verlaine, Arthur Rimbaud, and Stephane Mallarme. It is worth mentioning here that Rahi has translated many poems of these legendary French poets from English into Kashmiri.

Symbolism, as a reaction to Romantic spontaneity, exuberance and profusion of expression, advocated poetry of feelings and senses. They opposed the idea of "Organic Form" and believed that a poem has to be the product of conscious creative labour. The poet, after getting inspired by any object of nature, a scene or some phenomenon, must pass through a stage of pre-writing, think and rethink over it, till an equivalent symbol in words emerges in the creative mind and then be written in the form of a well structured text. Even after writing, the poet has to edit it as a conscious critic and give it a final shape.

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The poem, according to Edgar Allan Poe and all other symbolist poets, has to be short, or we may say proportionate to the duration of the experience to be communicated. Poe wrote in his famous essay "The Poetic Principle": I hold that a poem does not exist, I maintain the phrase 'a long poem,' is simply a flat contradiction in terms. (Wimsatt and Brooks 434)

Rahman Rahi, too, in many of his critical essays, written in Kashmiri, (Kashir Sheeryi: Moojuud Duor, Jedeed Kashir Sheeryi te Watnaawruq Masla, etc,) has advocated brevity of expression particularly with reference to symbolic poetry. His poems are brief and proportionate to the chosen symbolic structure. The mode of symbolism compresses vast experience into a significant symbol. The symbol gives scope for multiple interpretations and ambiguity. Modern critics like Empson point out ambiguity is the core of intense expression.

As a modern poet surrounded by a disordered reality, Rahi realised the significance of allusions in poetic craft. He made allusions to myth, ritual, and folklore. Allusion is the main poetic device to achieve indirect expression so that ambiguity becomes the beauty of poetry. It was directly under the influence of T.S. Eliot's theory of "Impersonality of Art" that Rahi accepted ambiguity as a means of obtaining suggestivity and plurisignification in verse. Rahi, like T.S. Eliot, believes that a poet has to imbibe influences from the poets of other ages and other cultures in order to achieve optimum impersonality. The oft quoted passage from T.S. Eliot's much celebrated essay "Tradition and Individual Talent" goes thus:

> ...the poet has, not a 'personality" to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways. Impressions and experiences which are important for the man may take no place in poetry, and those which become important in the poetry may play quite a negligible part in the man, the personality. (Selected Essays 243)

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Rahman Rahi, too, in his literary essays, advocates suggestivity through indirect expression of emotion which becomes impersonal. He believes that "ibhaam" (ambiguity) is the strength of poetry not its defect. I.A.Richards wrote:

> ... the old rhetoric treated ambiguity as a fault in language, and hoped to confine or eliminate it; the new Rhetoric sees it as an inevitable consequence of the power of language and as an indispensable means of most of our important utterances – especially Poetry and Religion. (Philosophy of Rhetoric 40)

Following I.A.Richards, Rahman Rahi emphasises and illustrates the artistic use of ambiguity and oblique statement in poetry in his two collections of critical essays: kehveT (The Touch-Stone) and shar shineesi (Evaluation of Poetry). In accordance with the symbolic mode of poetry, Rahman Rahi believes that the strength of poetry lies in the suggestiveness of poetic language. Since all states of mind are elusive, their expression too has to be elusive or ambiguous to produce multiplicity of meaning. Rahman Rahi transforms the available language to give form and texture to these elusive states of mind. He comes out of the routine usage of words, re-energises them by delving deep into their primitive associations, and the result is a mystic presence of ordinary things. Rahi admires Mallarme's view "... primitive language, half forgotten, half living, exists in each man. It is language possessing extraordinary affinities with music and dreams. (Wimsatt and Brooks 593)

Here we recall W.B.Yeats' view regarding how symbols and emotions are intricately related. The precise symbol evokes precise emotions. In Yeats' words:

> All sounds, all colours, all forms, either because of their pre-ordained energies or because of long association, evoke indefinable and yet precise emotions, or as I prefer to think, call down among us certain disembodied powers, whose footsteps over our hearts we call emotions. (Wimsatt and Brooks 598)

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A short prose-poem of Rahman Rahi illustrates his symbolist method:

ہے زبروَن بالہٕ تھَنگہٕ !

وآسہٕ پرار یسے

ژ ژھو پہٕ پھٹر کھ

مے وو پدیم گاش

ہے زبروَن بالہٕ تھَنگہٕ !

چانہٕ بلہٕ وُٹھ کر وَچھ وُزِ تھ پھولہٕ میون اَر و پٹر ک ازلہٕ گرینز

لژھ گمژ یمہٕ میانہٕ اُچھ ہو ہو سوٗ در نینگتھ بران سو کھ ساوک پمپوشہٕ بم

کونتر بلہٕ وُزوا کھ سر گم

میانہٕ وَچھ وو تھ وَژنہٕ مُدرا

باغہٕ بر گژھ وو تھ

یمبر زلہٕ

لہٕ زَن شرٕ پتھ گژھ بو مبر گتھ

نظر مئیل پڑا گاشہٕ کول

ہے زبروَن بالہٕ تھَنگہٕ !

ژ ے تہٕ آدن بوج میون

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بےتہ وَسہ منز چون سرَ یہہ
وانسہ پرَ ریوسے
میون بیا کل دُبدٕ ہ زانہہ بو، زتھاہ؟
اَوہٕ زتہٕ نم ما ربَر بو، کہ آ ش چاٚنٕ ہ وہہ راے..... پوٚز
وونٕ ژے یلہِ مہلتھ دِنے
(میاٚنٕ وتہٕ پدٕی ما لبکھ!)
پرَ اران بہ پرَ ارے
گردِ آیلہِ گتہ گژھتھ سو ژاکہ وار
وَچھ وُشن گُفتار شوٗنک
نیند رِوٗٹھ کُجار بھوٗل

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Tr.

O Zabarwan Hill!

O Zabarwan Hill!
I waited for my whole life
that you may break
your silence, light might spring out
from my within, O Zabarwan Hill!
From your stony bosom
shall gush forth my amorphous primeval shock,
my dust-ridden eyes might engulf
the roaring oceans and fill their skirts
with lotus flowers.
From Kontilun shall gush out the music of vaakhs,
and from my bosom there shall spring out
the music of vatsans;
the garden gates shall be thrown open,
the narcissus shall be drenched by morning dew
like the hovering of the beetle,
meeting of eyes, and long lasting light!

O Zabarwan Hill! My childhood pal!
I, with your love in my bone-marrow,
waited for my whole life.
Did you ever hear the restive throb of my heart?
Yes, I did hear
many a time your hidden pent up reverberation,
You shall be allowed freedom,
(You may not find my foot-prints then,)
Yet, I shall continue waiting,
a drifting lonely boat beyond the vortex.

The warm speech in my bosom is in slumber,
a smile dawns on the lips of sleep.

(Tr. Shauq)

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The poem is addressed to a mountain that borders Srinagar city in its East. The mountain is presented as a cluster of symbols that get their meaning from the "half-forgotten language" that still lingers in the poet's mind. The mountain appears as a mute spectator of all the vicissitudes of the history of Kashmir and at the same time stands for hope of revival. It is the poet's imagination that gives a personality to the mountain and makes it an embodiment of history. It stands for the mystic past that is overlaid by the layers of custom and routine.

The poet addresses the hill personified as the poet's bosom friend. The hill has been a mute spectator of all the cataclysmic changes that the city in its precincts had undergone. The poet has been watching it throughout his life that it would sooner or later break its silence. Yet the hill remains a recluse assuming the resolve of silence. The hill does not reveal anything to the poet. However, the poet has certain personal hope that the hill might stir his imagination so that he could give shape to his experience, and write such immortal songs about the past glory of Kashmir. He looks forward to welcoming the return of days of joy to the city, otherwise overtaken by deadly gloom. It was here in Kashmir that great mystic poetry flourished and great works in many fields of knowledge were produced. Expression in language had the potential to have the desired impact. Kashmir's has glorious tradition in creativity, philosophy and architecture. Reference to Kashmir is given by the name of the hill, Shalimar and Nishat gardens, the local music and poetry of Lal Dyad (14th century) and Habba Khatoon (17th century). He is painfully conscious of the fact that the dust of routine and continuous subjugation has deprived the people of all its pride and pleasure. The poem ends with an optimistic note that a day is sure to come when the poet's country would have its lost glory restored:

> The warm speech in my bosom is in slumber,
> a smile dawns on the lips of sleep.
>
> (Tr. Shauq)

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Further, Rahi's technique of structuring a poem and use of allusions could be illustrated through Sadaa ("Call"), a well known poem:

صدا

"چوں صدا سیر م بروں از کوچۂ زنجیر نیست"---بیدلؔ

ژُیس چھُکھ تہٕ سُہ
میون فریاد بوز

ژٕے چھُسے ونان
یُس وُشنہٕ کہ گو ڈنکہٕ ودتھ ہٕوَ برہ نہہ
وٚنو تھمُت اوس
تہٕ شٹھیارٕ کہ اَنتکٕ لَرٕ پھٕرٕ پتہٕ تہٕ نژان روزِ
ژٕیہٕ چھُکھ تہٕ تہٕ
میون فریاد بوز

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ژٕے چھٕسے ونان

سۄ درس اوبر رنگ

آفتابس لوٹیۄ ک

بُترٲ ژنیچہ کیۄم

واوس ہندِ پوشُک فانوس

بوزَ کھیَ چھُکھ .....

بوز میون فریاد

شرٕ پھ یمن میانٛین راوِ مژن نظرن منز

تہٕ ہاوٗ کھ ---

یَتھ پرٕوٕنہٕ وتہٕ کتہٕ آگُر،

یَتھ اِر سرٕ کرٕوٕنہٕ جویہٕ ٹکریو وُکس وتہٕ رود

ژٕیٚتہٕ آکھ تہٕ

مٕنچھے شبہ رنگہٕ اَندیٚ پکھیٚ چانی قدمچ چراپھ وُزان

دٕیٚو ژیونمت آسی

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لرِ کانمے بیلہ پھٹ مأنتھر پھریکہ وِنی امبرس کُنج
یِو نچ لون ژھم دودِ ہیڈرس
رامس رِ کھ مأنڈم سیتایہ
پیٹھی کھورِنہ امریٹہ سریہہ ووتُم
تتھی آم کان
ایڈِ پسس پیوم انہِ گٹہِ کوران
کوران
کو رِتھ
آخرنے ژدسل، خنجر

پنی أچھ رتہِ
شیہلاؤنن

حافظ ہندِ ہٹہِ یزیدِ ہنز کر یکھ بوزن والیا!
میون فریاد بوز
پتہِ کنہِ اوسُم شیتل ژھلتُ رأیل ون
ان زأنی منز ہُش مُش پأٹھین نیوم تھلتھ

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(روتلہِ چھُم تار کھ نب وو ہوان)

بُتھِ اَسم خلو کھ زُوپُر ی ین ہندی

ونونہِ آلو

تم کھیئیم یمو تیزی سو نچو سیکہِ شاٹھن پیٹھ

نیکہِ نیکہِ دِگہِ دِگہِ

(دو بلی ہو ٔ ژُ ونگان)

ہے ہنگامن ہندِ ہنگامہِ

شرز گوو دامنہ رُسی تس بالس

ڈُلہِ

رہٹر زونہِ چھُچس ژنہِ بُس

''بازروالیو خالی یمژن مس ملرئین کو ڈتلہِ سڑ کن پیٹھ ٹاس''

یورِ نلن تھا اویکھ جُری جُری

سو نہری ،نجہ تہِ ،کری مزی گاڈِ

شو کیسن منز پنکہِ اُلراوان نیلاہنکر پمپوش

بوچھِ ہتی پیغمبرنیہِ ولیت نشر کران:

''رُستم کھسہِ رخشس

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ظُلماتس پٔیٖہِ تاپھ
اَنس ژلہ حأر تھ
جب کھسہِ پہلس پتہٕ پتہٕ نیور
سنگر مالہِ گُلأ لی ریٖہن منز ازل ابد کھو کھلأ و تھ نٕن!''

ژیُس روپ پراوَ کھ تہٕ سُہ
میون فریاد بوز
گٹہٕ پچھ کتھکنٔ گِنٕد نردس
تٕو پتہٕ کس ہتے
تٕو پتہٕ مے چھُ پانس مؤٹھمُت
کوہِ داٰمنٔ اُسی گرٕ نزٕ سی تیر
اکھ اکی سندس چأنٹس گُن
ہے بونگہِ وچھان!
پہلٕ چھ شہر ژلتھ بتہٕ یُدٕ بنتھ
دوپھ تہٕ دُبنگہِ پیمتے

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ژ الماس چھُکھ کِنہٕ سۄمبل
میأنٛی حالات وُچھ
حلقہٕ مُدرأوِتھ انجیل پٔر پادریٕو
آنگنن ہندی کھٕرٕ گلی ربر وودنہٕ لگی
لول گامو گُٹھو ہوسہٕ ڈُوی ڈُوی اوٗنٛکھ
شیرٕ ژأراہ کٔرِتھ شہٕر چھوپٕکھ
تہٕ بازٕری کٔڈٕ کھ روسی کٔٹ
وانہٕ پٕنٛچن چھےٚ ووٚنی ہوٚنی ژوٚپہٕ رایہٕ ہٲلے گُمٕژ

تارِ کوٹین چھُ بجلی ڑان
کانسہٕ مارأوِوَتھ ؛
گاش یٕلہٕ ھٕٹہٕ مٕ زن بہٕ ژھن:
کتٕرجہ أسٕ یہٕ کٔرٕ ناش کوٗر
سٕڑکہٕ پیٹھ ،
کیاہ وٗنکھ

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میون ت آن ونیکھ :
یم چھ گلر، زرکتہ أنی، پس

چھنہ ہیکان ما زچھیر تھ ؛
رو، وولن تہ وونی کتھ سأ سالس گژھو
کھدر ٹینڈیس وں کڈ کاڈ آفھنہ تیمہ

ژنے چھنہ وان
ہے ایلیم کیو م ورو پیٹھ چھنیمہ چھنیمہ کروہ نار!
ابو، ترابس میر بونہ کالیس وٹھ گمناون واجیو میژی!
ہے کربلہ پلہ چھدر چھدر کروہ آیہ!
ہے چنگیر س تلہ وارین منز پھریلہ وہ واوا!

وچھ
کنہ پیٹھ چھس یتھ ژلہ وہ سیلہ پیٹھ
کن زوون پوتس ٹھلہ تلان!

(Rahman Rahi 1997, 134-9)

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Tr.

Call

(The call I give is like the sound of a chain caught up in its loops.____Bedil)

Whosoever you are,
listen to my call.
I am addressed to you
who emerged even before the primeval warmth,
and will be there ____ dancing,
even after the ultimate chill.
Whatever you are____ listen to my call.

To you am addressed I:
a streak of cloud to the ocean,
a dew drop to the Sun,
a grasshopper to the earth,
a pappus to the wind.
If you are heedful, listen to my call,
merge into my bewildered eyes, reveal to them,
whence does this flowing path come, and
what indirection befell this writhing rivulet.

Wheresoever you are come from,
I hear your thud close to my breath-stream.
May be you have felt when the enthralling apple-tree
sprang out of my rib,
the very first spade
pierced through the sprouting mushroom____ my babe;
Sita transgressed the line for agonized Rama;
the very heel that was not dipped in elixir received the dart;
Oedipus scratched and scratched the dark and at the end
soothed his thirst –burnt dagger
with the blood of his eyes.

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O you, who harkens to Yazeed's scream through Hafiz's call,
listen to my call!
There was a tranquil dense pine-forest behind me,
unwittingly and rashly I felled it down.
(Nightly the starry sky imprecates me.)
In front of me, solitary pixies' island calling me in their sweet lays;
my corrosive thoughts devour them all at the sandy shores,
with nebs and pecks.
(Dogs howl in broad daylight.)

O you, the tumult of all tumults,
Shraz tumbled down the footless precipice,
the argentine Moon showered soot on it.
The marketers hurled the depleted flasks on tarred roads.
They have bedecked their urinals
with golden and crimson fishes,
fans swing the nylon flowers in the show-cases;
the hungry messengers broadcast their flute-tunes:
Rustum will ride his steed;
the dark will be illumined;
the mirror will get rid of its amazement;
the flock will follow the shepherd to the mead;
in poppy-hue, the cliffs will rummage eternity from the beginning to the end.

Whichsoever form you assume, listen to my call!
How shall I play the dice?
And then with whom, when I no more have the prowess?
Multitudinous sheep at the hill-slope gape at each other's mouth;
the shepherds, stuffed to their fill, fled the city,
and are lying in utter torpor.
Be you a diamond or hyacinth,
behold my condition. T
he priests recite the scriptures in their mellifluous throats;
the date palms in the courtyard shed tears of rubber,

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love swept away from the countryside
is edited and published in the city;
the gazelle is paraded in the market;
the shop-porches are now accustomed to dog-fights.
Lights are there at the lamp posts,
lest anybody should go awry.

When there is glare again they will grill me.
Who ransacked the swallow's nest at the roadside?
What shall I tell them?
My Quran will tell them:
'they are deaf, dumb, and blind,
they will never return to the right path.'

It is raining,
how shall we go to the feast?
The languor will overwhelm even our toes with opium acridity.

I am addressed to you:
fiery flames blazing over the towers of Ilium!
Smiling clay besmearing Ali's frame!
Writhing waters of Karbala!
O you, the wind, blowing through Chnagez's nostrils!
See:
How long have I been there on the eroding sand,
all alone,
playing with pebbles.

(Tr. Shauq)

The poem "Call" reveals how Rahman Rahi structures a poem as a conscious product of creative activity. The poem begins with a verse from a famous Persian poet Bedil that adequately summarizes the theme and tempo of the poem that the call of an alienated person does not reach anywhere; it is like the sound of the fetters that gets absorbed in the loops of the fetters. This technique of using a verse or a line from some classical poet was new in Kashmiri and

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reminds us of several poems of the modern English symbolist poets who have used this technique.

The first stanza of the poem is an invocation to "God", God is not named; instead of naming the supreme divine power, Rahman Rahi calls him by His various attributes, indicating implicit agnosticism. But recognizing the presence of a guiding mysterious principle, the poet personifies these principles as if they hear the call of the poet. The symbols are primitive and universal in nature. They suggest the eternity and the unimaginable beginning of this universe.

Whosoever you are,
listen to my call.
I am addressed to you
who emerged even before the primeval warmth,
and will be there — dancing,
even after the ultimate chill.
Whatever you are — listen to my call.

The poet is determined to draw attention of this nameless God. God has no beginning, no middle and no end. He was, is and will be there. Above all "dancing".

After invoking the "Listener", God, or the ultimate force, he attributes all causes and effects to him. The Biblical allusion that Eve was born from the left rib of Adam in the shape of desire and Adam's tasting the forbidden fruit suggests that Man was preordained to commit the "Original Sin". Eve felt tempted to taste the forbidden fruit and thus expelled from paradise. It was again God's will that the beloved wife of lord Rama transgressed the line of demarcation resulting in a series of tragic events. Determinism is suggested by two more allusions to the myths of the West, those of Oedipus Rex and Heracles (Hercules). Oedipus unwittingly committed patricide and incest and then in horror and sense of sin blinded himself. Heracles was born immortal, but died because an arrow struck him at the heel which had not been dipped in elixir at the time of his birth.

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Then the poet calls God indirectly as He is not listening the calls of the good, He many a time responded to the calls of the Evil. God heard the call of "Yazid" who martyred the grand children and all the kith and kin of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) at Karbala. God heard the call of Yazid when Persian poet Hafiz depicted him as a character in his work. This technique of roping diverse allusions is typical of T.S. Eliot's poem "The Wasteland". The allusion is followed by many more allusions; every line has a direct or indirect connection to other literary texts existing in European or Oriental literature or religion. At certain places he borrows even lines from some other poets and amalgamates them with the text of his own poem. It is the running mood that gives connectivity to this disparate material. Rahman Rahi's creative genius and scholarly reading weld all other texts into a unified text. The poem becomes densely packed with varied allusions and thus demands reference to many pre-existing texts. The reader must possess adequate knowledge of all these texts to understand the poem.

O you, the tumult of all tumults!
Shraz tumbled down the footless precipice,
the argentine Moon showered soot on it.
The marketers hurled the depleted flasks on tarred roads.
They have bedecked their urinals
with golden and crimson fishes,
fans swing the nylon flowers in the show-cases;
the hungry messengers broadcast their flute-tunes:
Rustum will ride his steed;
the dark will be illumined;
the mirror will get rid of its amazement;
the flock will follow the shepherd to the mead;
in poppy-hue, the cliffs will rummage
eternity from the beginning to the end.

The reference to a character in Kashmiri mythology "Shraz" (a male character in Kashmiri mythology) is interesting as the poet compares man's inexorable desire to possess all to the meaningless

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strife of the Shraz that vainly tries to devour the Moon. Being tempted by the shining, full Moon, Shraz climbs up a vertical precipice and jumps toward the sky, tumbles down, dies, gets decomposed. Then worms eat the body up. When the whole carcass is eaten up, the worms devour each other; the last worm that survives gets metamorphosed into a new Shraz and thus the cycle continues.

The poet reflects on the resplendence of the past and the dullness and boredom of the present.

> *The marketers hurled the depleted flasks on tarred roads.*
> They have bedecked their urinals
> with golden and crimson fishes,
> fans swing the nylon flowers in the show-cases;
> the hungry messengers broadcast their flute-tunes:
> Rustum will ride his steed;
> the dark will be illumined;
> the mirror will get rid of its amazement;
> the flock will follow the shepherd to the mead;
> in poppy-hue, the cliffs will rummage eternity from the beginning to the end.

The poem like *The Waste Land* of T.S. Eliot draws a poetic contrast between the meaningful antiquity and the meaningless contemporaneity. The poet or the speaker in the poem abhors the artificial glamour of the present day life and thus obliquely alludes to the natural way of life lived by mankind in the past.

The poem ends with an optimistic note as he feels that the whole march of civilization is grounded in evil and tyranny. And yet man is hoping against hope that his call will be heard:

> I am addressed to you:
> fiery flames blazing over the towers of Ilium!
> Smiling clay besmearing Ali's frame!
> Writhing waters of Karbala!
> O you, the wind, blowing through Chnagez's nostrils!
> See:
> How long have I been there on the eroding sand,

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all alone,
playing with pebbles.

Allusion to the burning of Troy suggests that it was God's Will. Again it was God's Will that Hazrat Ali's body was besmeared by clay.

Allusion to Karbala is the Battle that took place on Muharram 10, in the year 61 of the Islamic calendar (October 10, 680) in Karbala, in present day Iraq. On one side were supporters and relatives of Muhammad's grandson Husain ibn Ali, on the other side was a military detachment from the forces of Yazid I, the Umayyad caliph. Man does not know why a Tartar tyrant Changez was allowed to destroy all that was noble and beautiful. In spite of all these attributes of God, the poet feels like an innocent child playing with pebbles. He is hoping against hope that his call will be heard.

Inspired by T.S.Eliot, Rahman Rahi deliberately packs his poem with allusions: historical, religious, literary and philosophical. This is his way to impart meaning to the chaos and the seeming meaninglessness that lies at the core of every creation. In order to create 'meanings' the poet forges new associations or relationships with things through his imaginative faculty. The text of the poem to Rahman Rahi is a mosaic in which each pattern is artistically arrayed to attain the desired effect. It seems that Rahi has followed Eliot's theory in all its details so far as the structure of the poem is concerned. His indebtedness to Eliot is evident from many of his prose writings Rahi asserts that in the contemporary world there is no scope for sentimental lyricism. The poet's task is to "force language to his meaning". The more effort is put in by the poet as a conscious artist, the more perfect will be his poetry.

Rahi is, however, different from Eliot and other modern English poets in having an approach to life that is still grounded in the nineteenth century romantic and mystic poetry. Many of his poems are extensions of other Kashmiri mystic poets, especially Lal Dyad and Shamas Faqir, Ahmad Dar, Rahman Dar, and Wahab Khar. It

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is only the structure of the poems and his discarding unnecessary lyrical word-play and looseness of expression that make him different from the mystic poets of Kashmir.

In order to create multifold meanings he emphasises the "creative use of language" by making new combinations of words. He firmly believes that poetry is no poetry if there is not some new "creative" expression in it. Rahi's metaphors stand as testimony for his creativity for they are strikingly original. He invented a new variant of poetic diction which has invigorated Kashmiri language.

Though Rahman Rahi did not experiment much with the poetic genres, as did his senior contemporary, Dina Nath Nadim, his contribution in this direction also cannot be ignored. It was under the direct influence of Gerard Manley Hopkins (184-89) that Rahman Rahi experimented evolving a new rhythm without following the traditional regular metres, word-repetition, end-rhyme, internal rhyme and alliterative patterns. Rahi followed Hopkin's "Sprung Rhythm" so as to bring verse closer to the natural rhythm of common speech. He also wished to free poetry from the linear unit and thereby achieve a freer range of emphasis. No line of his poems is a full syntactic unit but cluster of broken clauses. The impact of Hopkins has been absorbed in the poem "soonth" (The Spring) which gets its strength from the intimate relation of poet's imagination in the assemblage and spontaneity of natural phenomena that comprise the advent of spring. He has deliberately avoided his subjective reactions.

سونتھ

تھپ کرتھ کا کد تلن پنجرس تہ
وُشن اتھ ہندرس ڈیکس پھر واں وہ تھم:
وُنہ تہ مٹھیہ شنہ تھوڑ اُچھن آکاش کیہ کرنہ یار ہیتھ؟

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ہژری کنڈ! ہو، میون ہمہ ،
زمرو، دی ہمہ .....

لولہ ونہ وشلوو وچھ تمبر یو وجو
متہ چھ زہ واں واو ہانگل
ژانکر سہہ شاعرس رتھ سندی جہ بو، لے
مالہ پلہ منزی کانین ہندرس ژشتھ پونر اکایل تاپہ ہنڈو ژہنتھ ہنڈوری گتھ

ولر گتہ منز گاڑو زمانہ وڈری تھر پیٹھ سریہ زژہنز لو اُدرتا رکھ ہلکہ

وتہ پیٹھ پدی پوشہ کوتر کرایہ ہندو ہوون گلو

نہ، ہوا، بترا تھ
سنہ سوُدرچ کنی سبزار وو بدہ ژرہ رہ خوشبویہ ژھٹھ
اُچھ، قلم، کاکذ، حرف، گنبز، فضا
ششتھ ہاواں اُچھو کھورو

وکھ چھ یور آمت!

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Tr.

Spring

With a pop the breeze slit the paper of the lattice,
placing its warm hand on my icy forehead, said,
"Are your eyes still bearing the insect-like swarms of the gliding snow-flakes?
You a bramble thorn!
'Hoo' is my breath,
antidote is my warmth."
In the forest of love, the sparks have illumined the bosom, the whole being,
The love-lorn are shaking the airy-chains,
Under the candle flame the poet's blood is but the warble of the mustard bloom,
Underneath the mountain-boulder, the moth, by the touch of the sunshine, sucks the sap of the tender grass-runners, dances in wild abandon,
the fish of the Wular lake with golden flashes the bush of the upland under the sky replete with dew-wet star-bloom.
The foot-prints on the path are flowery pigeons, the ambling is singing dove;
the sky, space, and air,
filled with the gale of fragrance emerging from the fathom of the ocean,
the eye, pen, paper, words, the minaret and the space,
all the six dimensions evince:
time has moved ahead.

(Tr. Shauq)

The speaker feels the coming of early spring when a slight breeze breaks the paper sheet that covered the latticed window during chilly season. The breeze then assures the speaker that the cruel winter is over and now the warm breath of spring has to rule.

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The pleasant warmth shall heel up all the scars and enkindle hope in all the benumbed souls. With the advent of spring all the bushes and trees all of a sudden sprout forth their new verdure and bloom. The incarcerated lovers who had remained confined run frantic and break their shackles. The poet, too, feels fresh impetus to write fresh songs in candle light. Not only on the surface of the earth, but this regenerative process is in full swing also at the bottom of deep lakes, like the Wular. The whole atmosphere is filled with fragrance that emerges from the depths of oceans and all the things around speak loudly of the advent of spring.

In "Sonth" nowhere does the poet make any statement of exhilaration or despondence. The things in their stark "thinginess" articulate the changing moods and emotions. The sensuousness of the poem is intertwined with the natural music of the language. The poem makes all interpretation futile as the imagery in the poem is an end in itself. The poet's purpose is only to show, rather present, the exuberance of the beauty of the natural phenomenon. It is the euphoria of an awakened soul that runs through the poem. The poem can be understood as the natural fluidity of creativity as a process.

In his poems, Rahi, the skilful artist, employs all the techniques of poetry, rather than remaining restricted to any one or two. Prof. G.R. Malik writes:

> Rahi's poetry comprehends a wide spectrum of passionate thoughts, feelings and emotions. Contradictory impulses exist side by side, now held in balance, now standing in contradistinction. Earthliness, nostalgia, a sense of amazement, resignation and calm acceptance of things, rejection and petulant rage, absorption in the moment, carpe diem – all this appears as exquisite poetry. Lyric beauty predominates but contains within its bosom wisdom, satire and drama. (127)

Rahman Rahi, a living legend, has not stopped writing even in

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his old age; he is in his late eighties. Retaining all the salient features of his unique style and craftsmanship, he writes on all varieties of themes pertaining to politics, religion, mysticism, satire, and individual suffering. Most of his recent poems deal directly or indirectly with the recent political turmoil in Kashmir that has shattered all values of tradition, peace, harmony, positive thinking and humanism. The poet, with an ambivalent attitude to politics, comments on the unprecedented violence that has shaken the very roots of an old culture marked by diversity and harmony.

Rahman Rahi depicts the present political predicament faced by all sections of society. Being disillusioned by all the political programmes of the time, he seeks remedy for the individual and collective anguish and suffering from the tradition of mysticism that has enabled the people to survive in many ages of aggression and bloodshed.

Addressing the fourteenth century woman mystic poet, Lal Dyad, Rahman Rahi wrote "Call without a Sound: An Ode to Lalla":

ٹھنیو رٚوس صدا

واوولِنو کتھن ہیی کھر
سۄدرس چھے گریکھ تہٕ تیخ پاگر
گُل نغمہٕ بلبلن سنیو زر
دِودأری پُتھرِ ڈدی رتگھ سر
تارَ کھ منڈل پھسیٚے زِ سس تل
أش وانہٕ پیرٕگے صنوبر

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لُلی ! باغہٕ بُرٕی اُژِتھ زہر کھیکھ
ژُلی شِو شکھتھ ، ڈُل بُلی کشپ مَر
اکھ واوِ گیٚژ رو کنن پھُر
شمعہن سنیٚے سیاہ خنجر
پمپوش چشمہٕ ڈرٕی چہٕ دِہٕ زد
بلوٗنت سینہٕ واوِ پھُٹٕی بر
شہنامہٕ اچھر اچھر مرثی
گُلریز ورقہٕ وَرقہٕ کُنڈٕی ژھر
گاشُک عمل تہٕ بوٗندقہٕ بَرنج
سنڈیلیٚے تہٕ نارِ منظر
بَرہَم نفس لِچ حِکایت
اخبار سر گرِفتہٕ بانبر
آوارِ نیب پھیر پوٗت کُل
اندیشہٕ سُرٕی چھُ سونچہٕ دفتر
رلچ سوزو ، نہٕ ڈَب ، سہٕ سازُت

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دیوانہٕ سونتہٕ خواب ٹیٖشتھ
شوریٚوتہٕ ہانکلن دیٖتٕن وَر
وِنگلیٚو وشیٖنہٕ سووہَر موکھ
دٚود واوِ ہالہِ ژونگ بَرسَر
سوٚسنٛ گُلالی وِیٖہہ کُرِتھ وٚتھی
رَتہٕ وٚون اٖسہ ملگُزارن اندر
پرٛژھنے دٚوپُم دِلن دِوسٕ لُچ
ریٖہہ چھ کوٚرمے رقصِ آذر
مجنوں متیٚو دَمبالہِ وٚچ تُچ
زمزٛمی وظیفہٕ ناگہٕ مَنتر
سرشار سرفروش مٲداں
ہَم ہَم ہجوٗم کوچہٕ بازر
باسیٚو زِبارِ سورِ بَربت
باسیٚو زِ وہتلہِ وُنی پُشکی مَر
ناگاہ موٗسمس نظر لُچ

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بادام وارِ بادِ صَر صَر
گج بین أچھن سہ جشنہٕ ماتم
ناساز ژٹھ، تہٕ لولہٕ گتھ ژوے
بَد سور کنن دُعاو وہَو ژر
بَد باس دِل، تہٕ گاڈنَد ہَر
کیٚمی کوٚر قصوٚر نیاوی پوشس
کاوٚلی سنڈاسہٕ سورگہٕ کوتر
چھیٚندی کیاہ کراں زُوٚن سمندر!
سونہاٚری زوہَر قس چھوٚری گتھ
شاداب نظرِ شوٚنت انبَر
یا سحرِ نیٚولہٕ تیٚمہ زبَروَن
یا شامہٕ شفقہٕ ژھوہ وولرسَر
کم خواب! راز ہونز ہمدم
کم شوق! پاٚزوایہٕ شہپر
آفاقہٕ وٚوتھ بےٚ پھرٚیک تخیٚل
وُزمُلی تصوٚرَس سونٕز ج تھر

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برجوش ناگ لاشعو رُک
باہوش من صحیفہ شو ژر
اَسرارِ شُبہ تہٕ معنہٕ پرور
آسُن تہٕ ذوقہٕ زو رِزوتن
ناسُن تہٕ مخزنِ عُرقہٕ اَدفر
گچھ کورتہٕ گُلفروشس آلو
دِمچیوتہٕ پُرکیہٕ وَنوُن ازبر
آنگن تھرِیٚن تہٕ غُنچہٕ پھُھرن
سڑکن قدم حُبابی لشکر
زونکھ زِزُلفگے اویزان
ڈیونٹھک بدست آو گوہر
بوزُکھ حُسن مژھ خوشاوے
ہووُکھ عشق بکف مقدر
جایاہ زِسرکیہٕ، زوٚن، تارَکھ
حاراں: زِ آستاں زِمندر!

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یو جو ٗ ج گل تہٕ کوہِ موجو ٗ ج
ریٚش وَن بنیو وشرٕ اکہٕ بازَر
وُچھ بزٕنِد بزٕنِد سینہٕ کو ٗ بی
وُچھ بَرنہٕ بَرنہٕ لاشہٕ بے سر
ہُتھ سروٚڑھایہٕ مسولَن تھپ
یتھ تاپہٕ کزٕایہٕ گُل پُژن پَر
ہَے گامہٕ گامہٕ حُکمِ نأدِر
ہَے شہرٕ شہرٕ کارِ ہٹلر

وٚوبلِ رٚوس نظر اسپر گُنبَد
دَم پھُچہٕ دِشایہٕ داغ دَر بَر
ہُے وٚوتھ زِ کزٕ ہُن کرٕ ہُن بزٕ ادیو
گِرد ایہٕ گیر گو وسمندر
پوٚت زو ٗ نہٕ آوِ رن اَماوَس
موٚت بولِناوِ کُس قلندر!
دٚوپنم وُزاں ژٕے کونہٕ شش کل

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دۄپمس: صدف شکستہٕ گوہر

دۄپنم: اَندٕر ری گٹک چھُ زالُن

دۄپمس: نیٚبرٕ ی فضا مُکدّر

دۄپنم: نےٚ بو زابو زِ آلو

دۄپمس: کوہن مُژر کُٹھیٚن بَر

دۄپنم: وَزے بہٕ شُنی یِس ٹھیٚو

دۄپمس: بہٕ یو سَرُ ک شِناوَر

دۄپنم: ژے چھُ گلہٕ زبرٕ ماں ظٹون

دۄپمس: مٕ پَدٕ نو تلٕ احدر

دۄپنم: زماں پُشر ہواوس

دۄپمس: زیٚن مٕ نیرٕ نا وَر

ثلثہٕ

دۄپنم: مٕتیا اپنہٕ پاس تھم

دۄپمس: مٕژی! تنگہٕ نۄن کر

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سو مینار کو ہو پیٹھو سفید یا ہو،
سبز ژھانن وونز کر جگنو
ہو تلپتا پچ کر فتہ خو شبو،
یہ یار تہ ربک ہو گل ہو اہیو،
پتھو تہ بار دی لہر فلک جو،
وہ تھو تہ بے رنگ عالم بہر سو،
تتیے سلند رمتیے ہلا کو،
ز گتھ تہ جنگل

زنم تہ کو، کو،
تتم تتم تھ

تنن تنا ہو،
نژی نژی انکہ رسہ ہوا لتھ
وزو، وزو، ٹھینپو رسہ صدا تھوٹی

(Siyaah Roodh Jaren Manz 101)

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Call Without A Sound
(An Ode To Lalla)

I

O Wind, be not confounded by stirring thought,
the ocean is ebullient; the steed's hooves are nail-punched.
The flower-crazy warbling bulbul is struck dumb,
lakes of the fir-covered land's run dry.
Many a constellation sunk into the abyss;
many a cypress are inundated by tears.

Perchance, O Lalla! if you revisit your garden;
surely you shall prefer to take venom.
Shiva and Shakti, both, fled their abode,
leaving your Kashpmar a deserted land.
Gales ransacked all pleasure rooms,
black daggers fell on all the candles lit.
Lotus-like eyes, casements ajar
are overwhelmed by murky smog.
Brawny breasts now wind-struck doors.
Every word the Shahnaamah of yore
reads like a mournful elegy;
Gulrez torn to shreds, now a thorny creel.
In wee hours begins our everyday
no sound, the pop of guns is heard,
in the eventide flurry of flames are seen.
every soul dumfounded, pent up tales;
news papers reflect but helter-skelter.
All dispersed hopes, musings, and ruminations,
are flooded by sinister premonitions.

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II

Yesterday's music in moonlit chambers,
held as ocean all isles in thrall.
rapturous dance in golden row-boats,
verdure and tranquillity in plenty we beheld.
Resplendent looked the Zabarwan cliffs
in the dawn, in the dusk, the waters of the Wullar
thrived and thrilled in crimson glow.
What sweet dreams accompanying swans,
soared freely high in the skies!
Desire fluttered with wings of the hawk!
Imagination descended unhampered,
lightning-like thoughts shone golden bright;
the unconscious gushed forth swelling founts.
Awakened mind, a tome hallowed;
breath a mystery, heaved with meaning.

Having shone like a lamp-lit niche,
not-having encouraged strife and sweat.
When rooms were fondly clay-laved clean
the flower vendor anon they called in.
When smoke was inhaled, nymphs' lays were heard.
Buds of the garden bush hurried to burgeon;
steps on the road, a berserk brigade;
curls unfurled cascaded down,
intimated, a booty hidden was unveiled.
Beauty a passionate welcome note,
expressed love, destiny in hand.
A place of shrines and temples sacred,
made the sun, the moon and the stars envy.

III

Having many a spring-dream,
The frenzied grows wilder, breaks his chains.

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Snow-clad Harmmukh melts down,
a lamp lights up there on the windy peak.
O Iris, you brightening like poppy blooms,
in graveyards wakeful nights in abandon.
Without asking my soul intimates
in full swing a fete is on again.
I quaffed a flame, like Aazar I dance.
Frenzied lovers took their prank scarves,
founts of magical crooning gush forth.

With death-defying fervour the open is filled up,
streets and markets humming with crowds.
The starling shall carry the hill on its wings,
slumbering Kashpmar has re-emerged, it seemed.
Suddenly the weather took a whimsical turn,
freezing wind blasted the almond bloom.
The cynic's eyes, these mourning processions;
morbid reflection, treason in a story of love.
Evil-hearing ears hear volleys of abuse.
Some unseen worm gnaws the bulb of the crocus.
Gog's designs and Magog's hill:
the sages' jungle turns into a thicket of swords.

At every doorstep there is beating the breasts,
headless carcass lies at every threshold.
In cypress's shade the narcissus is uprooted,
in sultry sunshine all flowers are ripped.
Oh, every village is under Nadir's rule,
Oh, every town falls to Hitler's command.

Sight is captive in a gash-less dome,
in all directions these stifling barricades.
Hubbub that all are jinxed by eclipse,
the ocean is engaged in its own vortex.
Late-hour moon is engulfed by gloom;
no sage is there to augur some good.

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IV

"Why don't you awaken your consciousness?" She said.
"The pearl," I said "is in a cracked oyster."
"Your inmost dark you raze." She said.
"Outside," I said, "is turbid and vexed."
"Unheard calls I hear." She said.
"Open the doors," I said "of the cells under-hill."
"In spaces I resound a buzz." She said.
"A swimmer," I said, "I'm of the lake of truth."
"Your thought traverses all skies." She said.
"Under my feet," I said, "a dragon there lies."
"Consign your tongue to winds." She said.
"My maimed limbs," I said, "Oh! I could stretch."
"You crazy one, be not so annoying." She said.
"Ecstatic Lalla," I said "you dance nude again"

V

White doves soar over hyacinth decked hills;
red glow-worms move in green shadows.
There that fragrance hid in the Hades,
Here a free zephyr over the tops of pines.
Mercurial waves in the skies we arise.
A flag without a colour we shall flutter all around.
Alexanders are irate, Hilakoos berserk.
This world of men and that verdant forest,
birth and rebirth, a music unending:
tatam tatam thay, tanan tanaahuu.
O gales without form, you dance and dance!
Go on resounding, O soundless call!

(Tr. Shauq)

The above lyrical poem in extremely obscure idiom has five sections. In the first section the poet portrays the spate of violence that

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has left the valley of rishis and saints completely battered. In his distinctive poetic metaphor Rahman Rahi draws a picture of a fir-covered Himalayan valley that has been devastated by a catastrophic cyclone. The sweet warble of the Bulbul is no more heard. The land that was once covered with firs has parched dry. The stars, signifying men of achievement, have fallen into the ocean of oblivion.

There is an apostrophe to Lal Dyad, the spiritual guide of the people. Lal Dyad who is famous for having sung of the union of Shiva and Shakti in Kashmir is sure to commit suicide. There is destruction all around. The poet recounts the pleasure and glories of the collective past of the people in which simple living, ordinary pleasures, fun, festivity, reading tales of romance and carefree frolicking were the hallmarks of society with a history of its own. Those pleasures of the past like reading and enjoying the epic of Firdousi (a famous Persian poet) Shahnama is no more there. It has been replaced by elegy expressing mourning. People have forgotten their cherished versified tales like Gulrez of Maqbool Shah Kralawari (a 19th century Kashmiri poet).

In the second section, there is again a poignant nostalgia. Kashmir in the past was a land of pleasures, fun, frolic, music and art. The poet painfully remembers how people used to get enchanted by the natural beauty. When in spring the Zabarwan Mountain in the vicinity of Srinagar city was covered with greenery, common people, rich as well as poor, could not sit indoors. They enjoyed boating in the lakes. The birds soared high in the sky, signifying hope and resolve in the minds of people. The mind of the poet, too, was struck by lightning-like thoughts and gave vent to their soaring imagination. Common masses welcomed the advent of spring and cleansed and decorated their houses. The flower vendors roamed in the streets. The young boys and girls enjoyed decorating their dress and hair. They could go outdoors unhampered. Kashmir was a land of great saints and Sufis who shone so brightly that the stars in the sky envied them.

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In the third section, the poet speaks of the cataclysmic political uprising when teeming thousands came out into the streets demanding freedom. It appears to the poet as if the snow-clad mountains melted, the primeval lake of Sati Sar roared as a massive deluge, and all the shackles of subjugation were torn asunder. The whole atmosphere is filled up with hope and enthusiasm for assertion. But, all of a sudden, the revolution took an ugly turn. Bloodshed, massacre, mayhem, intimidation, extortion and intellectual suffocation became the order of the day. All the cherished values of the Valley were gone with the wind. Every family is bereaved as thousands of young men and women are killed. The section recalls to mind the famous verse: "O Liberty, what things are done in thy name!" But this spate of enthusiasm petered out abruptly. Disillusionment and dismay swayed all minds. The Valley of saints became the target of the angles of destruction — Gog and Magog who ransacked it thoroughly. It appeared as if tyrants of the past like Nadir and Hitler were reborn to destroy all.

In the fourth section, the poet, completely disillusioned and dejected, has a dialogue with the great spiritual woman poet Lal Dyad who advises the anguished soul to have a journey from the great Without to the great Within. It is only withdrawal from the external and dive into the ocean of spiritualism that can relieve the anguishing soul from the horrors of the social reality.

In the fifth and concluding section, there is a sense of hope again. Hope is suggested by images like: white doves soar over hyacinth decked hills, fragrance pent up in the Hades gets released, zephyr moves over the tops of the pine trees, a flag without a colour, signifying total retraction from politics, flutters all around and the poet dances with the rhythm that emerges from his awakened soul. It is only in uttering a "soundless call" that the poet finds consolation and freedom from dread;

tatam tatam thay, tanan tanaahuu.

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O gales without form, you dance and dance!
Go on resounding, O soundless call!

The poem is full of allusions. The first allusion is to Shiva and Shakti. Saivas regard the absolute Parma Siva as the Creator, Preserver and Absorber. In his different aspects, he manifests his Shakti (Power) and withdraws it when His Free Will (Swatantrya) demands it.

Saivism is the most ancient faith of the Indian people, developed and became part of Hinduism in the age of the Epics and Puranas. From remote times, Kashmiri Brahamins worship Shiva and Shakti.

In Kashmir's Saiva Philosophy, the manifestation is regarded as based on Shakti. It explains that the universe already exists in Siva. Thus the world is the expansion of Shakti which is not different from Siva.

The second allusion in the poem refers to Shahnama, commonly known as 'The Book Of Kings', is an epic of 60,000 verses written by the Persian poet Firdousi around 1000 AD. It deals with the mythical and historical past of Iran from the creation of the world and the introduction of the arts of civilization (fire, cooking, metallurgy, law, etc.) until the Islamic Conquest of Iran (Persia) in the 7th Century.

The third allusion is to Gulrez, a Mathnavi of 2200 twin lined verses by Maqbool Shah Kralwari (1820-1875), a Kashmiri poet. A pathetic love story of Gulrez and Noshelab.

The next allusion is to Aazar father of Ibrahim, the worshipful of idols of fire.

The fifth allusion is to Kashpmar, the abode of a Hindu saint of Kashmir (Kashyap Rishi) who according to the legend was responsible for settling the people after getting the great lake of Satisar drained after incessant prayer and meditation.

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The next allusion is to Gog and Magog. They are men or super natural beings (giants or demons) mentioned in the Scriptures of the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims who lived in ancient times. It is said by scholars that they inhabited the northern areas of Asia and caused corruption on the earth. Then people request and offered a tribute to Dhul-Qarnayn, a Prophet of Allah, in exchange for building of wall between Gog and Magog, and the rest of people living around. Dhul-Qarnayn agreed and said that Allah had given him enough strength and would build a wall with their help. He constructed a wall between two mountains, out of iron and then poured molten metal over it, so that no one could climb over or dig under. This stopped Gog and Magog from threatening them.

(The Holy Qur'an 18: 94-97)

The seventh allusion is to Nadir, a king of Iran (1688-1747), ruled during (1736-47). Some historians have described him as the Napoleon of Persia or the Second Alexander because of his military genius.

The last allusion refers to Hilakoo, a fourteenth century Tartar war-monger (also called Dalchu) who unleashed terror, plunder and carnage on Kashmir.

Thus we see how Rahi, under the influence of the theory and practice of the English symbolist poets, especially W.B.Yeats and T.S.Eliot employs the aesthetic norms of symbolism in all his poems. When we evaluate Rahi's poetry in its totality, although it has two distinct phases, we find continuity in it in terms of poetic diction and use of symbols. There are numerous recurring symbols that form a pattern and constitute what Malik calls Rehiesque style. Some of his favourite symbols are gulaab (rose), yimbirzal (narcissus), van (forest) syieminy (a lioness), peez (hawk), kootar rath (pigeon's blood), mitsiry kond (bramble thorn), tsoong (an earthen lamp), ryeh (flame) aavilun (a vortex), vyath (river Jhelum), kashpmar (Kashmir), zabarvan (name of a mountain), kartal (a dagger),

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and swanihery gaad (golden fish). Many of his poems are extended symbols in which Rahi selects an image and describes it according to the semantic correspondence that gets birth from the mental associations with that image. Rahi is a symbolist par excellence. He has given a new dimension to Kashmiri poetry.

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CHAPTER — V

Shafi Shauq: A Modernist Poet

Shafi Shauq is considered the most distinguished poet among the host of poets that emerged after the seventies of the twentieth century in Kashmiri. While all other poets can be grouped in one way or the other, Shauq stands out as poet with unique style and technique. He has a unique approach to life that he stands like an alien among his own people. His nazms (short poems) and ghazals written and published during the last forty years reflect his perception of the world as well as his notions about poetry. Himself being an outstanding and path-breaking literary critic and man of erudition, his poetry and criticism go side by side and are complementary in nature. In some literary circles Shauq's poetry is being severely criticised for being "outlandish". However, Shauq has received acclaim from many contemporary poets and critics like Rahman Rahi, G.R.Malik, R.L.Shant, Shashi Sheiker Toshakhani, Majrooh Rashid, Syed Rasool Pompur, and Rashid Sarshar. The debate about his poetry is actually a debate about the fundamental question of relation between contemporary reality and contemporary art. Here, for instance, is an excerpt from an exceptionally brilliant scholar, G.R. Malik:

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In Kashmiri literature, in all its dimensions, Shafi Shauq is the name of a phenomenon. He is a critic, literary historian, linguist, translator into and from Kashmiri, researcher and a remarkable modern Kashmiri poet. Though he has been writing poetry from early days and occasionally many of his poems have appeared in esteemed journals and anthologies, Yaad Aasmaanan Hinz ("Remembering the Skies") is the first collection of his poems in print. This, we expect, heralds the start of his glorious career as a poet whose first signs are clearly visible here. A survey of his poetry so far should not claim any finality but try to sketch the growth of his mind and art in a way as to point to the horizons that it looks forward to. (187)

Majrooh Rashid writes:

It is under Shauq's skillful treatment that one finds the short poem establishing itself as an authentic genre in Kashmiri as a specific and technically perfect form of poetic expression. Likewise, he brought maturity to free-verse and blank verse forms and imparted intellectual verve to the Kashmiri Ghazal which for centuries has been feeding itself mostly upon naïve simplistic youthful yearnings and imagination and impoverished modernistic, fashionable jargon and clichés.

There was a time when Shauq's poems manifested themselves as verbal icons, but his poetic idiom has outgrown the cliché-ridden poetics of New Criticism and the poet has developed a fresh poetic idiom, confessional in nature and rooted in the psyche of Kashmiri society.

Both in the nazm and the ghazal Shafi Shauq's poetry is an honest expression of the fact that the poet has put in all his creative potential to rescue Kashmiri poetry from the freezing clutches of rigid Persian prosody which most of the Kashmiri poets have been using for long too mechanically to suit any fresh approaches and variant attitudes to things. Shauq, by means of both his poetic composition and innovative mind paved the way for a

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> liberal approach vis-à-vis the above mentioned prosody and discovered and devised alternative rhythms more consonant with the peculiar genius of the Kashmiri language. (38-9)

Mohammad Shafi Lone (Shauq) was born in a typical Kashmiri peasant family in a remote village of Shopian district on March 18, 1950. He lost his mother when he was hardly four-year old. His father, a strong supporter of modern education, had a government middle school in his own house and, as such, Shauq was fortunate to get admission to the same school in his early childhood. His elder brother, Naji Munawar, (a Sahitya Akademi Award winning Kashmiri writer) was appointed as a school teacher in Leh, Ladakh, like a guarding spirit, took every care that Shauq's education was as per his own ideals. He kept sending all manner of children's literature to him through post. The magazines that he received regularly through post were Khilauna in Urdu, and baal bharti in Hindi. Through his readings, Shauq developed a taste for creative writing in his tender age itself. He was also influenced by the numerous tales of romance, adventure and war that his father read out to the village folk in wintry nights in his living room. In 1959, his brother Naji joined the family and devoted his quality time to educate Shauq. He made him read Lewis Carrol's Alice in Wonderland and Jawaharlal Nehru's Letters from a Father to His Daughter and Krishan Chander's Urdu novels ulta darakht, ek gadhe ki sarguzasht and gadhe ki vaapsi. He was also fascinated by the works of great Russian fiction writers like Tolstoy, Gorky, Turgenieve, Pushkin, Chekhov and others. The books left an indelible mark on Shauq's formative mind, stimulated his imagination and the result was that Shauq started writing poems and stories in Hindi, Urdu and Kashmiri in his school days. At Higher Secondary School, Shopian, he opted biological science as his main subject. He was selected as the Secretary of the Cultural Club of the school and student-editor of the school magazine Kausarnag. Meanwhile, he developed a penchant for English poetry and translated several poems into Kashmiri. The translations published

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in the school magazine won him immediate popularity among the students and teachers. He shifted to Higher Secondary School, Kulgam, wherefrom he passed his Higher Secondary Elective examination. He took admission to Government Degree College, Anantnag, for doing B.Sc. In collaboration with his friend and colleague Gulshan Majeed Shauq started a monthly literary journal in Kashmiri, titled Aash. He edited the journal, and did its calligraphy and even promoted its market.

Shauq, being associated with the political activities of the radical Left was arrested several times, and was finally detained for over twenty-two months in different jails, including Tihar Jail, New Delhi. Having failed to get a good score in B.Sc. he did his B.A. in English literature during his detention. When he was released from detention in 1972, he took admission in the Department of English in the University of Kashmir. It was during his post-graduate studies that he got married to his childhood friend Ferooze of Nawakadal of Srinagar. He was appointed as Research Assistant in the Lexicography Unit of the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, Srinagar in 1976.

During his studies at the University of Kashmir, Shauq agitated for the establishment of the Department of Kashmir. And when the post-graduate Department of Kashmiri was established, he was appointed as a lecturer there in 1978. During his active service, Shauq continued his studies and did his M.Phil and PhD in English. The subject of his research was "Comparative Study of Syntactical Patterns of English and Kashmiri." Since 1978, Shauq has been working in the Department of Kashmiri as Lecturer, Reader and Professor. Besides, Shauq has worked as Dean, Faculty of Oriental Learning (2002-2005) and Dean, Faculty of Arts (2002-2006) and has been member of various academic bodies like University Council, University of Kashmir, and University Syndicate of Jammu University.

Shauq has won several prestigious awards like the Sahitya Ak-

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ademi Literary Award (2006), Bharti Bhasha Saman from Central Institute of Indian and Foreign Language, Mysore (2003-4), Best Translation Award from Sahitya Akademi (2007) and the Best Book Award from the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Language, Srinagar (1982). His writings have been translated into all the major Indian Languages, and some foreign languages like English, German, Spanish, French and Chinese.

In recognition of his extraordinary contribution to literature in Kashmiri, English, Hindi and Urdu, Shauq was sent as a member of Indian Writers' Delegation to Beijing, Shanghai and other provinces of People's Republic of China in 2002. He represented India as Guest of Honour in various states of Germany in 2007. He represented Indian Writers in various seminars, panel discussions and interviews in London and Manchester in 2009 on the invitation of the British Council. Shauq is associated with several National Academic projects and his academic enlightenment was well appreciated in several national and international seminars. Shauq has authored, edited, and translated over fifty-five books in Kashmiri, English, Hindi and Urdu.

Though Shauq began writing in his school days and published his poems in some prestigious journals, including soon adab (1964) his serious literary career was launched in the early seventies of the last century. It was the period when the Progressive Movement had petered out and the Modernist poetry in Kashmiri, too, had started showing signs of decadence in terms of clichéd themes, repetition of symbols and metaphors. Shauq was the first Kashmiri poet to take a bold departure from the established trends. Most of his contemporaries, on the one hand, obstinately believed that the essence of poetry lies in its lyricism and free expression of emotion. They followed the style of the romantic and Sufi poets of the 19th century Kashmiri poets. On the other hand, the poets with modern education followed the style established by Dinanath Nadim that was emphasised use of common speech and description of objective reality

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through fresh imagery. The symbolist trend, established by Rahman Rahi, to express subjective moods and mystic thought through abstract expression did not find many followers. In this poetic atmosphere, Shafi Shauq's poetry did not conform to any of these trends. His acquaintance with the modernist and post-modernist poetics and practices in English made him choose a new way of writing that abhorred mere lyricism, unnecessary detail, old mysticism in new expression and ambiguity for ambiguity's sake.

Modernism, that swayed literature in Urdu, Hindi and other regional languages in the 80s of the 20th century, was a reaction to dominant lyricism, poetic ornament, traditional realism, and adherence to traditional myth and legend. Various Modern poets in English literature were T.S.Eliot, Dylan Thomas, Ezra Pound, W.B.Yeats, Scott Fitzgerald, etc, and most of them used the style of free indirect speech, wide use of classical allusions, intertextuality, parataxis, irony, satire, unconventional use of metaphor, discontinuous narrative.

Actually, Modernism is an international movement in art and literature that was inspired by shocking changes in society and ethical behaviour, and also by new developments in science, anthropology, philosophy and psychology.

All these changes were bound to influence Indian writers' thought and approach to life. In the Indian context, concepts of modernism and postmodernism were a natural result of the end of feudalist system of society, industrialization, urbanization, cosmopolitan culture, horrors of communal riots, loss of values and widespread corruption at all levels of social hierarchy. While Modernism tries to find meaning in the meaningless scheme of reality by the use of myth and legend, Post-modernism aims at portraying the absurdity itself without making it servile to an imposed order.

In Kashmir, many conscious writers were familiar with changes in aesthetic, ethical values, and news concepts about treatment of

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theme and use of Modern and Post-modern techniques of writing. Shafi Shauq, unlike his contemporaries, did not make poetic comments on changes in society, or lament the loss of old values, he accepted the changed reality. He made the immediate reality, serious as well as drab, the basic concern of his poetry. He avoided ostentatious use of boring legends, repeated allusions, superfluous jargon, loneliness, nostalgia, and disillusionment and other stock themes. Making the moment of experience the target of expression, his poetry aims at depicting physical presence of individual and social reality in consciously and artistically designed structures. His notion of physical presence is that individual and society are a process rather than a state. Every experience that a poet finds significant for poetry has to be in relation to a particular space and time. Avoiding making statements on experience, Shauq's verse invites his reader into the visible and tangible objectivity of experience itself. Having first-hand experience of diverse life-situations – from his effervescent youth to long periods of imprisonment, from typical rustic modes of living to having travelled in different parts of the world, from early country schooling to the University education and from being dubbed "outlandish" to wide acclaim for writing about multifarious subjects, Shauq's personal life is an inexhaustible repertoire of experience. Ratan Lal Shant wrote about this feature of Shauq's poetry:

> Unlike some for whom modernism was a posture more than a way out of the morass of cliché' and gibberish, he does not seem to have believing in dividing human experience and fields of expression and observation in such categories as proper or improper for poetry. No experience was out of bounds for him because he believed he passed through it honestly. In a poem "kal" (yearning), for example, striving for a far unreachable goal seems to be futile while a moment of carnal pleasure may be more rewarding and meaningful. The poem is an expression

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> of celebration of a stark experience that would be considered loathsome in an atmosphere traditionally surcharged with moral or ethical preoccupations. (12)

Spread over forty years, Shauq's poetic journey reveals his conscious effort to distance himself from the traditional as well as the current styles of writing. As already mentioned, he began his career when Modernism had reached its full maturity in all forms of Kashmiri literature and the debate on critical theory of modernism was at its full swing. Eventually Shauq could not escape its influence. Here is a poem of his early phase of writing that shows his conscious effort to write in conformity with English poets who influenced him.

وأل وُہان

تیزاب ، تلہٕ پیٹر تیل ، نٹہٕ ووٚنی ، گُمہٕ
بُیہٕ کاتھ گوٚ وٚن مُند رس
ر گن منز موٚٹ تہٕ سیاہٕ مُر بہٕ
شہید ۔ ار جایہٕ پیٹھ ہر

واپھ مرجستہٕ مگر کھمہٕ ..... سرٕنی تالاب
بار سٲری پشٹر تہٕ کھسہٕ وُن ہال
شہید ۔ اارٕک مرمہٕ شُہل چھاوُن پیٹھ ہرتن !

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"خیال، حرکتہ رٔوس..... حرکت تھٕرٕ یہ رٔوس
تھٕرٕے صورٕتہ رٔوس
صورت رٔ تھٕرٕ نہ رٔوس"
شہید ۔ار تھٕوو کونہ أسٕ تہٕ کُل مبٕتھ
(11 کتوبر، 75ء)

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Tr.

The Hell is Burning

Acid, bile, salt water and sweat
and secretion of many glands,
a turgid, black, viscous fluid runs in the veins.
They compete for a space
in martyrs' cemetery.
The sowing season is in its full swing,
but the fields are deep ponds.
The foot soles are slippery,
a steep hill ahead to ascend.
Oh! those soothing shady trees
of the martyrs' cemetery!
"Idea without motion,
motion without making,
making witout form,
form without preservation...."

Why not to have every patch
of the martyrs' land allotted?

(Tr. Shauq)

In this short poem, the poet produces an image of contemporary reality in which the pretentious politics and false promises of commitment are the root cause of turmoil. The clash of hollow ideologies further aggravates the behaviour. The title of the poem "The Hell is Burning" is justified by a series of images which seem to be unrelated at the surface. It is the internal logic of the poem that relates the "broken images". The poem begins with an image of a morbid person who has "a turgid, black, viscous fluid" in his veins not blood. The fluid is composed of acid, bile, salt water and sweat. All these components allude to corruption in blood. In spite of this deep-rooted moral degeneration, the people suggested by "they"

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show off to the public. They claim to be engaged in some holy war and while living pretend to be prototype martyrs. The fight with one another to occupy a piece of land in the "martyrs' cemetery. They are people who are already dead at the moral level and pretend to be living. The image is followed by an image of sowing. The people alluded to in the first image show off that they are busy in a strife of reconstruction. This is suggested by the image of sowing season. Their hectic activity of "sowing" is futile as there is no soil to receive the seed. Instead of fertile fields there are deep ponds. This image is followed by an image that seems to be unrelated to the preceding images. The same vile people are striving to ascend a precipice, suggesting height. Again the strife is seen as absurd because their "footsoles are slippery". Yet the pretentious and perverse people crave for the soothing shady trees of the martyrs' cemetery. The series of images is followed by a bold comment:

> "Idea without motion,
> motion without making,
> making without form,
> form without preservation...."

This poetic method is in conformity with the modernist poetics of deleting superfluous elaboration and roping together significant images that are full of suggestion. We find the influence of T.S.Eliot's poem "The Hollow Men" in the four lines, quoted above from the poem. The following lines of Eliot's poem seem to have inspired Shauq:

> Between the idea
> And the reality
> Between the motion
> And the act
> Falls the shadow
>
> For Thine is the Kingdom.
>
> Between the conception
> And the creation

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Between the emotion
And the response
Falls the shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom.

The turgid fluid is warm blood in veins, the martyrs' cemetery signifies the motive to sacrifice, the shady trees in the cemetery signifying desire for paradise, and competition for a piece of land in the cemetery signifies claims of sacrifice by the politicians. The poet then expresses his dismay at the discord between the various forces which when harmonized could lead to creative and sublime order. He depicts the three basic elemental forces, that is, behaviour, preservation and annihilation, working not in sequel, but against each other. If there is at all some creative idea, it is not strong enough to stimulate one into action and, if there is any action, it is not productive. If at all there is productivity it merely brings forth mass without form or shape. If there is form, it is uncouth or repulsive that one does not feel like preserving it. All these suggestive behaviour refer to deterioration of intellectuals and politicians.

Shafi Shauq in his early youth translated many poems of English poets like John Keats, S.T. Coleridge, P.B. Shelley, Robert Browning and the translation work stimulated him to write short poems in Kashmiri keeping in view the standards of the genre of the short poem in English. This conscious effort gradually leads him to his behaviour to go with the theory and practice of Modernist poets. He writes with faith that every writer writes in response to the writings that he or she has come across. No poetic product can come into existence without having vital connection with other writers' writings. Any attempt at writing in isolation can be at the most a word play. Commenting on this principle of his creative activity, Shafi Shauq writes:

> As a reader and writer, I have been in print for over forty years and my collection yaad aasmaanan hinz (Remem-

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> bering the Skies, 2005) is my today's selection of my poems written in these forty years. Reading and writing, I believe, are two inalienable and simultaneous activities of a poet, if originality and individuality are a poet's irresistible stimulating yearning that causes him desired creative restlessness. Every poet has to be a member of a huge 'writer-plex" in which all the writers, dead as well as living, in his/her language, in other languages contiguous with his language and all the contemporary writers in the dominant languages of the world are members. Writing in isolation, or writing in a frenzied state of divine inspiration after waiting for the muses is no more acceptable to today's writer; the vates of the past is a zany of today. ... My poetry is not mine, certain autobiographical references notwithstanding. It is rather the poetry of all the people I come across, of all the poets who wrote or write and the critics who write about poetry. My poetry is a productive encounter, both combative and participatory between my thinking-self and the people I come across in busy streets, in the countryside, in hotels, in alien lands, the kindred in my own house and people slumbering in the graveyard, and all the people I meet in books. The health and growth of poetry of a poet in any language lies in his ever-increasing acquaintance with the miscellany of people.
>
> (*Indian Literature*, 2007, 137)

From the beginning of his literary career, Shauq has been practising and supporting conscious eclecticism and continuous reading as a prerequisite for original creative writing. In a recent interview with the researcher, Shauq explained his position about the compatibility of the Western poetic values with those of East. He says, "Unless the poet knows what others write, what has already been written and what needs to be re-written in a new language in a new time, the poet cannot write anything worthwhile. It would the old worn out language in a new versified order. The barriers of language mean nothing to a poet. Literatures in various languages have been

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growing only through cultural contacts, literary influences, inter-language translations and adaptations; the east and the west make no difference to creative writers. It is only the economic condition and the resulting socio-cultural changes that make any difference."

In his formative years, he was deeply influenced by three major poets of the time, namely, Dinanath Nadim, Amin Kamil and Rahman Rahi. Not only Shauq, other younger poets writing in Kashmiri followed one or the other of these three major poets. After a brief period of imitation, Shauq felt the need of finding a new path to give expression to the experience of the twentieth century sensibility that was bound to be under the influence of advances in modern technology and experiments in psychology and anthropology and contact with world literature. Kashmiri poetry of the time had already distanced itself from the romantic lyricism of the nineteenth century, and had embraced the techniques and modes of expression of 20th century British poetry and accepted Modernism in one way or the other. However, Shauq's radical thought and freshness of expression could not fit in any of the available models of contemporary Kashmiri poetry. While doing his master's degree in English literature, Shauq was deeply influenced by critical theory and poetry of Modernism.

Modernism that started in European literature was inspired by various social changes that topsy-turvied the values of social behaviour and ethics. The developments in philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and natural and physical sciences rendered all the myths about universe meaningless and absurd. It was meant as an international movement which brought in perceptional changes regarding poetry, fiction, music, painting, sculpture and architecture. It was a reaction to nineteenth century positivism, realism, naturalism. It received tremendous impact from the two World Wars, totalitarianism of Stalin, ethnic and linguistic wars, divisive politics, violence in the name of religion, class and creed, and artificial culture that flourished with advances in technology, production and purchasing power.

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Modern literature of England and Europe influenced Kashmiri literature as it influenced literatures of all the regional languages of India. Rahman Rahi, Dinanath Nadim and Amin Kamil were the path breaking poets in this direction. Modernism in Kashmiri, as in other Indian literatures, was interpreted variously by various critics and poets. However, some fundamental concepts that were common among them were: disillusionment with totalitarian political ideologies, particularly Marxist utopia; realization and expression of man's existential dread and alienation, nostalgia, recognition of meaninglessness of reality, use of myth to create meaning out of the meaningless, and avoiding direct comment on the reality. An Urdu literacy journal Shabkhoon, edited and published by an outstanding Urdu critic and poet Shamas-ur Rahman Farooqi was the most dominant influence on all Kashmiri writers. They generally followed Urdu and Hindi poets.

Shafi Shauq belonging to the younger generation experimented the modes of the three major poets, especially Dinanath Nadim. He, however, soon came out of the domineering influence of the major poets of his time. In reaction to their subservience to external music through rhyme and metre and explicit rendering, he stressed on structural beauty and perfection of form, evocative expression and use of myth as methods of giving order to a disordered reality. It was mainly Eliot's famous essay "Tradition and Individual Talent" that gave new direction to Shafi Shauq's poetry and criticism.

However, within one decade, he gave up his searching for set legends and allusions and myths. Instead, invented his own personal mythology. In this new direction, W.B.Yeats remained a major influence. There are many parallels in Shafi Shauq's poetry that immediately remind the reader of Yeats. He builds the images of the past of Kashmir as Yeats did of Byzantium. There is a poem in Shauq's collection yaad aasmaanan hinz ("Remembering the Skies") with the title "musaaafir ti janaavaar" ("The Traveller and the Bird") that seems to be an adaptation of Yeats' "*Leda and the Swan*".

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مسافیر تہ جاناوار

''وُچھ وُچھ ..... ہۆمہِ نبہِ دندکہ ہا
نچر ٹیوٗ ک کھِ واش کڈان!''

''نبہِ نچر ترأوِ تھ
مے چھِ نظرن تل تاپلٕ زوٗ''

وُچھ وُچھ .....

سبز رِ کھاہ اکھ ..... نبہِ نچر ژٗڈ ژٗڈ
لوٗت لوٗت ..... کاڈ کڈان،
وُچھ، اسی گُن ہا!

''حس کر، یہِ چھےٚ راون کل''

وُچھ وُچھ ..... وُچھ وُچھ ..... !ہیوٗر گُن ہا!

پکھِ وُہرأوِ تھ جاناواراہ
قدمن پٹھ تہِ ہاژھاے پیوٗان!''

پتہِ کیاہ سپدیوٗو.....

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اند وند رنگہٕ وَنل
گاسہٕ کرچن ، پنہٕ وُتھرن ، گُلی گوڈن
پٹھ گُنہٕ دأن ریہلی وَول پان
تاپس گے پھٕتی ، ہوہس گیہٕ زٹھ
ژمہٕ پٹھ اوسُس پکھ تیرن ہندِ وُشیرُ ک جود سزان
وُشنین تیرن تل باسیس
سایٕے وتہٕ زن ژُمی ژُمی آمژ

رنگہٕ وُنل یٕیلہٕ ہنہٕ ہنہٕ تُنی گیہٕ
ڈینٹھن ، أچھ مُژ راوِتھ ڈنھن
کنہٕ بلچ اکھ کھرپھ ..... تنگ تہٕ حد رُوس
أچھ والونشہٕ سوتھے دوٗر
نظتن بندی پٕتی أسس کنلس پٹھ مونڈی ہیوان
کنہٕ تیجن تل اوسُس
وُشن وُشن پکھ واو گژھان

(19 اگست ، 1981ء)

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Tr.

The Traveller and the Bird

"Look, look, there at the horizon, a green spot is spreading
its wings!"
"Beyond the horizons, I clearly see the sunny islands."
"Look, look...
A green line, cutting through the azure... gets extended, to-
ward us!"
"Be careful, it is a delusion!"
"Look, look...look look! upward
A bird with its wide spread wings,
casting its shadow on our feet!"

What happened then, a pomegranate hued mist,
covering every blade of grass,
every leaf, every tree trunk;
sunshine got entangled
in thick tufts and air entangled.
The magic of the warmth of feathers
pervaded his skin,
under the warm feathers,
he felt all paths getting shrunk.

And then when the mist of hues
was dispelled, he saw,
saw it distinctly,
A crevice in the rock...narrow and unending,
eye-lashes length distant.
Striking against the rock
the ends of his sight got blunted,
near his ears
he heard
a warm air blowing.

(Tr. Shauq)

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Now let us read Yeats' 'Leda and the Swan':

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her nape caught his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How long those can terrified vague fingers push
The feathering glory from her loosening thighs?
And how can body, laid in that white rush,
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engendering there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead?
Being so caught up,
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,
Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

(Yeats 1923)

The poem is in the form of a dialogue. A mature person is travelling along with his little boy on a deserted road. The naive boy gets thrilled when he sees a distant "green spot" spreading its wings in the sky. The older person warns him not to get fascinated by trivial things because he has more important goals in his mind. The distant sunny islands are his chosen destination. But the boy is frightened when he sees the green spot changing into the form of a huge bird spreading its wings and descending down upon them. Yet the traveller admonishes the boy that it is a delusion. The bird finally comes down and covers the traveller and the uncouth boy under its mighty but pleasantly warm wings. The traveller is completely enthralled. He feels crimson mist covering everything, making them undecipherable. He also discerns sunshine becoming viscous and getting entangled in thick tufts. There is a period of complete forgetfulness. The traveller, overwhelmed by the engrossing warmth of

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the feathers of the bird, has no more any wish for strife to achieve his goal. The mist ultimately gets dispersed. The traveller comes out of the thrall to find himself facing a blind wall. There is no path to move ahead.

In the poem, there is a dialogue between the two voices of the same persona: a lonely traveller who has a hallucination of a strange bird descending upon him. One voice is fascinated by the multi-hued mist and the large wings of the strange bird, the other voice; the rational part of the mind of the traveller admonishes the enchanted voice not to get enticed by the delusion. The conflict is between the restive desire and the considerate reason.

While Yeats' poem "Leda and Swan" depends on his impression about Michelangelo's painting in which the erotic union between a girl and a strange bird is shown, Shauq's poem shows the union between a fatigued traveller and a bird in hallucination. In Yeats' poem there is a reference to famous Greek myth in which we learn about the death of Agamemnon caused by the offspring of Leda who was raped and impregnated by Zeus. The outcome of the rape of a girl by a divine force is terror but a "violent enunciation", the beginning of a new cycle of history. In Shauq's poem there is an individual myth according to which the strife of life is caused by the desire for beauty inspite of the reasoning of the rational mind and the outcome is final acquiescence of soul to the pleasure principle. Though the two poems are altogether different in import and significance, the image of the bird and the erotic overtones are similar.

Shauq borrowed heavily from many 20th century English poets both in terms of themes and form. Some of his poems have structural affinities with the poems of Robert Frost, W.B.Yeats, Dylan Thomas, T.S.Eliot, and Ezra Pound. One perceives a striking parallel between Robert Frost's poem "The Road not Taken" and Shauq's "daph gov tsyier" ("It is Now Too Late"):

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The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could

To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Hard worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

(*The Golden Treasury*, The Centennial Edition 487)

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دَپھ گدو ژر

یہٕ وو تُمہٕ تھ ہجہٕ کہٕ وتہٕ وتہٕ
کھمبرین، کھاین، چھارین کُن نہ ظُنہٕ زانہٕ
شہجارن تہٕ ناگہٕ جھین مُند پروا کرنہٕ
کُن زۄ تھلہٕ رٕتہٕ بدی تراوان
پننین أڈی جن نارن منز موجود زۄنہٕ
اکھ اکھ قطرہٕ ہمت نادکرتھ زالان
تہٕ وو تم ہمہٕ یٖہٕ وتہٕ ہندی یم کاڈتہٕ یم شہجار وٚچھتھ
راوان، کریشان
امہٕ کمہٕ کھرٕ وورٕتھ بدی تراوان
تمہٕ وتہٕ کُن زۄن

کاش کہٕ بہٕ نہ آسُن تمہٕ وتہٕ وتہٕ اندتاں وٚاتھ
کاش کہ یٖہٕ اکہٕ مٖہر کانہٕ پرٕزھہٕ
کوہٕ وتھ ژار کھ؟

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Tr.

It is Now Too Late

Since I am treading this zig zag path,
without caring about the stumbling rocks, brambles, and ditches,
indifferent to springs and shades,
treading alone, taking countless steps,
burning the living sap of my bones and ligaments,
calling it my courage.
I have been lost
in the thoughts of the meanderings of the other path
and yearning endlessly.

Oh had I not reached the end
of the road I have taken!
Oh, if I were asked once again
Which path would you like to take!

(Tr.Shauq)

Both these poems are based on the same image: a lonely traveller having the choice of taking one of the two paths available. In Frost's poem the traveller at the end of the journey is sad for not having the opportunity in his life to tread both ways and for having no experience of the other. In Shauq's poem the traveller in his own voice describes his arduous journey on a road and at the end repents for having opted for that road and not the other one which appears pleasant and smooth. The option is closed because one cannot relive one's life. The two poems are so similar in terms of substance that Shauq's poem seems to be an adaptation of Frost's poem. The two poems, however, differ in form. Frost's poem is rhymed while as Shauq's poem is in free verse form.

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In the eighties and nineties of the twentieth century, Shauq showed more and more inclination towards poststructuralist and postmodernist poetics, both in his poetry and literary criticism. Post structuralism, theorized by Derrida, Lacan, Paul de Man and others, asserts that analysis of structures or texts does not lead to well defined meanings, but subverts it leading to meanings that are not necessarily there in the texts. Postmodernism opposes the idea of organizing a text in accordance with traditional boundaries of genre, gender, class and race. It emphasizes that the essence of life is disorder, and all forms of art, including poetry, should, therefore, present reality in an artificial order, but disorder itself. Poetry should not deal with generalities and universals, but with the immediate, local and native. Though Post structuralism and Postmodernism emerged in Europe and USA as a natural result of the horrors of World War II and total transformation of culture in by mid of the 20th century, the discourses reached the Indian Subcontinent side by side with Modernism.

Shauq wrote many critical essays in English, Urdu and Kashmiri, in which he tried to show how post-modern condition has been the fate of a common Indian and how emphasis on the immediate, the local, the momentary and ontological reality could be and should be the subject of postmodern poet. He writes:

> Postmodern condition does not necessarily mean living in concrete jungles of the West that flourish on heavy industrialization; it is our material and spiritual condition that is a consequence of the tension created by the incompatibility of our organic evolution with the sudden and overwhelming technological revolution that rendered all political and ideological frontiers meaningless. This condition of living does not comprise people's material possessions; it comprises their attitude and behaviour determined by the material condition created by the forces of technology.
>
> (*Post Modernism Language and Literature* 44)

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Shauq believes that today's poet has to live in a world which is no more bound by any specific culture or time-honoured faith. He has to adapt himself to a world of disintegration, fragmented bits of reality, and insulated spaces because all the "Grand Narratives" are dead, not because as Lyotard said so, but because modern world literature has completely and, perhaps for all times to come lost the scaffolding of these narratives. "Grand Narratives" (Lyotard 1966) of the past like rationalism, religious mysticism, Marxism and positivism. There are a number of poets and writers even in our time who write devotional mystic and ideological literature, but this kind of literature is far from representing our time. Shauq calls such kind of literature "recycling". Today's poet's task is to be contented with simple, ordinary, mundane and non-epic experiences and express those experiences in their objectivity.

In one of Shauq's poems, a country shop is picturized without any surface logic. The poem is just an assemblage of isolated images that in their totality depict a scene of destruction and stillness of human life.

یُپ وُستھ

وُچھنہٕ پاہٕ سیٚر کھرٕپہٕ منٛز میٚخ آہٕز نیٚرٕ تھٕ

سعد اللہ اینڈ سنز"..... زیٚر پاران

نوٚنہٕ ٹھیلس، اَڈ تروڈس، تھٕ کُنٛتھ

سٕے گگرٕ ژھل

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بال پٹین، کاپیہ، ایم بی ڈی، کوینڈر..... بیتر

مالکی سُن فوٹوأ کتھ گُن شیری تھے

ھذا من فضلِ ربی

شاہ رُخس اٹہ بارِ نیٹھ تنز مادھری

سعد اللہ نہ جایہِ تمی سُند کانسہ کوٹ

زیٹھ گیووکو پوورتُری تھے

ٹُپ وٗستھ ہوٚ چھ کول تہٕ کنہِ داتھر وتن

کُچھِ شہلس گُروودِنی

پرایہِ کو کرِ گاہہ بنہِ پیٹھ

وگورٗوٹمت کُدِ کاکن

بیٖہِ خبر کم ژورژنی

نیندِ ترأوِتھ

امہِ طوطس جاے تھزرس

زأنہِ کدلہِ کامہِ ریٹھ دِتھ

بیالہِ أندرِم کتھ ونان: مسلہِ چھُو اندنس تیار''

(Yaad Aasmaanan Hinz 77-78)

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Tr.

After the Spate

On the right side, the nail
has come out. "Saidullah and Sons"
is waiting for a slight push to fall.

Behind the salt and flour sacks
are the same rat-trap, ball pens
note-books, MBD, and Cavander & Co.
Father's photograph, in a corner, is intact.

haza min fazli rabbi;
Shah Rukh carries piggyback
a sparsely dressed Juhi.

The younger son sits where
Saidullah used to sit;
the elder one was killed
only on entering Kupwara.

After the spate,
the river is dry,
all the paths are overlaid by stones.
The horse stands still in the shade
of the granary;
the snuggling hens
nestle on putrid hay-stack.

The mat is occupied by Kudi Kak,
and then, there are some four others,
bevying after finishing off weeding,
Ama Tota, sitting surrounded,
who is finally home after having worked
for a month in the city at Zainakadal,

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tells them that the problem is about to be resolved.

(Indian Literature 1995, 121)

The flood has abated, leaving behind a desolate picture. The shopkeeper is occupying his usual seat in the shop. The name plate of the shop is about to fall. Various goods and foods of daily need are stuffed in sacks. Items like note-books, rat-traps, help books for common students and cheap cigarettes are placed on the shelves. The shopkeeper has kept the photograph of his father hung on the wall. The wall also bears a picture of Bollywood stars. The shopkeeper is the only son of his dead father as his elder brother was killed as a militant in a border village Kupwara. There has been a heavy flood that has swept everything in the village leaving behind heaps of boulders. The sense of monotony and desolation is further intensified by the images of snuggling hens on the hay-stack and a lonely horse standing still in the shade of the granary. Some of the country folks sitting in the porch of a shop while away their time in idle conversation. One of them informs others that "the problem is about to be resolved".

The poem symbolically refers to the abating of turmoil in Kashmir and the political uncertainty. Thousands, like the elder brother of the shopkeeper died yet nothing has changed. The method of giving structure to this apparently structureless reality shows Shauq's shift towards the postmodern poets. The poem is perfectly in accord with his notion of "aesthetic of the instantaneous". He believes that a poet's task is to particularize characters and events with reference to a particular space and time. The details of the surroundings are needed to reach to the subjective state of the character. A subjective state of a character, whether in action or reflection, is brief and momentary. It is his/ her relationship with the surrounding things. If a poet achieves this kind of representation, a good poem emerges. The details of the surroundings and reference to the time of action or reflection become inevitable. Shauq writes:

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> Even ritual and body language could be used in a short poem to create an aesthetic of the instantaneous. The individual caught up in time and space frame is seen voyeuristically in terms of changing images that have a tangential relation to his identity. The linear narrative and the logical sequence are replaced by fragmented descriptions and intermittent impulses. Actions, if any, become activities which are not arranged consciously to determine the identity of the character. The classical notion of character that it is the architect of its pain or pleasure is replaced by the notion that character is a victim of the forces of circumstances. S/he is portrayed like a zoo-inmate nonchalant to its spectators. The presence of the audience in terms of their acceptability and likes and dislikes in a poetic composition are no more felt; all manner of distinctions like poetic and non-poetic cease to hold any meaning. A postmodern poem is free in all aspects of the process of composition. Robert Lowell in his time called it a "breakthrough" as it freed expression from the tyranny of customs of rhetoric. It is the critics' domain to find out the extent of freedom in a poetic composition and the role of other texts in determining its text.
>
> (Post Modernism Language and Literature 47)

Shafi Shauq has a little world of his own. There is no scope for any such themes as are traditionally called universal in import. He meticulously avoids writing about mankind in general. He is contented to write about the little joys, mundane sorrows, pain and suffering of the living individual human beings in particularized situations which he represents at the physical level. It is his art of delimiting a given situation or character within a concrete and brief time and space frame that the individual experience is intensified to the extent that it becomes universal and impersonal. There is never any general comment on the experience presented, but the experience is shown in concrete description. Finding "a meaning" is the reader's job. Having experienced the agony himself, he chooses a character caught up in a "no-exit" situation, and presents him or her

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through his/her action. There is always a little story in each of his poems. However, the narrative of the story-based poems is punctuated by unpredictable incidents.

In one of his recent poems, Shafi Shauq presents the horror of a market place under the shadow of indiscriminate violence. The title of the poem is "The Bunker and the Bazaar." The poem can be understood in the light of the actual condition created in the Valley as a result of war between two forces in the streets. On the one hand there are the security forces living in miserable condition in the temporary bunkers, and unseen armed militants ready to strike whenever they find a chance. The plight of the common man sand witched between the two armed forces is shown with vivid description.

بنکر تہ بازر

بس شہن ہند تلہ تراو

اکھ شہہ بیس ناد

یمن آو سیمتین سیلہ ٹھیلن نیبر

بیہ ہوت نئیر ..... پھبلان

جانکی چھم ستیم ریتھ کروٹھ

ماتا جی گڑھ دوہے شامن شامن مالش واتنے

دپیو مکھ نیر نہ بر دنہہ

چار چھم نہ نیر نس

گانس اوس گہہ کڈنے

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بس وٗ ، ری گژھ پالسی مچور
لیلھلھ ثلو بیہ دوزٗم
کھھن آسن ہو کھیہ ہتۍ پھراٹھ گمژ
سو آسہ وٗنلین کلر کلس ت ، گمہ سٗری گژھتھ ہتھ
کرِ کیاہ !
ہے مگر بنکرس نیبر یہ ننیر ..... پھھلان

دوور یمتین سیلہ ٹھیلن منز باگ
کھرپہ منزٕ ہمہ زٕ اچھ
مٕدے گنڈ تھ
فوکس بدلاوان

ہے گو بیم یم جولنہ بیٹھ
دال ، اولو ، گنڈ اوٹ تہبند گوبی

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دیپان پانژن دوہن روزِ بند
وتہ چھ غنیمت
گرا کن ہندِ پر بارِ منز پان لنھی للھی نیر
یتین چھ راتک رتھ لاری تھے
''یتھنہ حض کھو رپیے وِ!''
نچہ کیتھ گووا کھ منگو بایٹ

کرِ تہِ کیاہ گرِ پہتھ بند کٹھس منز!

''دوپمو حض، ٹیٹ رپورٹ روٚٹو؟ طط
''ہے تراوساً! لُکھرُ و دِوان
کینرٕ ھاہ چھ اسہ تہِ ویترُن''

بنکرس منز منز کھز کھ ہش
بس اکھ سگریٹ ڈبی
تہ ژل!

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THE BUNKER AND THE BAZAR

I

A sequel of breaths,
One necessitating the other;
Outside, these putrid sand-stuffed bags
And the perilous open---extending.

Janaki's seventh month is difficult,
Mataji needs a massage daily in the evening.
I had told them I had to leave.
The barn was left un-cleansed.

The policy shall mature just after one year.
I shall write to them: borrow a little more.
The fields may be cracking in the sun.

She must be solitarily
Perspiring under the acacia,
What shall she do!
But oh! This open
Outside the bunker---extending!
The *rakhshas*!

II

Between two putrid sand bags
Two eyes through a rent
Staring
changing only the foci.
The shoulders pain by the gravid bags;
Pulses, potatoes, onion, flour, cabbage.
It shall be hartal for five days, they say
Time is precious.

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I shall wriggle
Through the madding miscellany.
The gore spilt yesterday is still unwashed,
"no tramping over please!"
A mango-bite for Chhutki,
What shall she do
Confined at home
And without friends?
"You received your test-report?"
"Forget,
people lay their lives
we too have to brook a little, you know."
A stir in the bunker,
A pack of cigarettes, and run!

(Tr. Shauq)

In the first four lines the poem the poet portrays the condition of security men as living human individual. Their life is nothing but a "sequel of breaths". Living in the bunkers made of putrid sand-stuffed bags, they are always vulnerable to the attack by insurgents. The individual soldier, therefore, perceives the world outside the bunker as a "perilous open". Then the poem gives the fears, anguish and aspirations of an individual soldier through the thought process going on in the brain of a particular soldier. He is reminded of his family duties like attending her pregnant wife, Janki, massaging his old and ailing mother, cleansing the barn. He has a glimmer of hope that his life insurance policy is about to mature and his family could borrow more. The soldier is painfully conscious of the terrible draught and there is no hope of any yield from the fields. He grows nostalgic when he remembers his pregnant wife waiting for him under a thorny tree, acacia. The brief flow of thoughts about his kith and kin is again cut short by his immediate fears. He perceives the bazaar, full of people, as extending open and replete with unpredicted dangers. He hates people, calling them "rakhshas" (devils).

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In the second part of the poem, there is vivid description of the common folks in the bazaar. Everyone is vulnerable to bullets which is suggested by the image of a hole between the sand stuffed bags through which the two vigilant eyes of soldier are constantly watching the scene. The folks are busy in purchasing food, medicine and cigarettes, as much as they can because there is apprehension of long curfew. One individual common man remembers the boredom of his little daughter who is deprived of going to school when there is a long curfew or hartal. Then there is a dialogue between two persons who know each other. One talks about his health condition and the "test-report", the other, being a supporter of the strike, talks about the "goal" of the "Movement". The scene ends with a reference to the fear psychosis of all as there is some stir in the bunker. People hurry to reach home.

Thus, there is neither metaphor nor any kind of poetic expression in the poem, yet the poem is dramatic in which the poet freezes some moments in a common market of Kashmir. There is some relaxation in the curfew and the people are busy in buying essential items for the family. On the other side there is a bunker in which the security personnel are under a constant threat of a grenade attack. One of the security personnel is lost in his soliloquy about his individual anxieties. The poet adds nothing to the picture.

In the world of contingencies and day-to-day eventualities, we find in Shafi Shauq's poems representing people of all sections of present-day Kashmiri society. Experiences like an old ailing mother ruminating about her family members all killed in violence, a gang raped girl surrounded by the dead bodies of her rapists, a professional entertainer deserted, a despondent father lost in memories of his estranged daughter fled, so on and so forth.

In his poem titled na hamiviny dag ("A Wild Lament") he reveals the agony of a girl gang-raped by unknown and unnamed gunmen:

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نہ ہموٚنی دَگ

بادچھم سو گوڈنچ دَگ

تہٕ بٕیہٕ سُہ اہٕر .....

بس دٕے بنیٚو و

نمہٕ نظامہٕ بابت یٕمیٚک

بھران چھٕ ساری، دَپھ و چھان نہٕ کانہ

تہٕ بٕیہٕ تمہٕ مازتنہٕ بابت یوہٕ

کہٕ دکہٕ الان روٚز

کہٕ اکہٕ آے تم

ہُن سیاہ اہٕر لبہٕ کُن تھاوٚتھ

تہٕ گوٚ وپنُم پنُن پنُن

زکراون بَل تھیکناوٚتھ

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بھرِ پھرِ آیہ سو پرأنز ریتھ پھرِ نہٕ
نوٗ تام یوٗ تام پھرِ تھ ہنٕکٕ

بتہٕ دٕتُہم ہٕکٕ چیر
نہٕ ترأوہس پتھ کُن اکھ سیاہ مکٔر یار

نہٕ وونٕ .....وونٕ چھِ تم سأری حرأمٕ
یکیاہ مُرِتھ پٮٛتھ
پرِتھ أکس خبرکأژاہ گولہِ جُژل سپنس منز

ماہ سوٚدے تہٕ سُہ لہر
کیاہ سنازِ ہنہِ ہنہِ سوران
نہٕ بنان مأے تہٕ عار
بمن مازبنن کیٖت؟

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بنہِ اہر ہڑ باکھ منز چھس بہ روان

بمن بأے جانن پَتھ

نہ.....یمن اولادن پَتھ

نہ.....یمن رانٹین پَتھ

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Tr

A Wild Lament

I remember:
the initial throe
and the horror
changed into loathing
for them and the system
that is talked of and never seen
and then for my flesh
that remained jerking
with each stroke.

One by one,
having kept aside his black terror,
hailed
his vainglorious rigidity,
and repeated the ritual,
till it was over done.

Then I was strangled
and left
a dead abomination.

And now
the bastards
are dead,
each bearing volleys of bullets
in his hirsute chest.

The loathing
gradually changes
into love
and compassion
for these strewn lumps of flesh.

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In my 'wild lament' I weep
for the brawny brothers,
nay my sons,
nay my husbands.

(Tr. Shauq)

The poem "Wild Lament" presents a gruesome and horrifying picture of a gang-raped woman lying in a semi-conscious state. There are several dead bodies of young men strewn around her. The woman in her frenzied crying recounts the incident. In the first few lines she remembers the pain and torture that changed into hate for the unknown "ideas" that prompts people to violence and killing. She calls their weapons "black terror" and their libido "vainglorious rigidity". She remembers that she was just an insensate lump of flesh that she hated and calls it an abomination. She does not remember what happened next.

In the next stanza, there is a hint to the subsequent incident in which another group armed men came and killed the criminals. She does not know who killed them.

Like a typical woman she is still full of compassion which makes her lament the dead young men. However, she is not able to understand why she laments and what relation she has for the dead. First she calls them her brothers, then her sons, and finally her husbands.

Thus the poem, full of drama, is focussed on one central image occurring in the present. The details of the past events are deliberately omitted but suggested through references to things around. This poem is typical example of Shafi Shauq's concept of a perfect poem that the text of a poem should be brief and should revolve round one particular central character existing in a particular time and space. There is no scope of lyricism and traditional poetic ornament. The poem also is an illustration of his belief that the traditional difference between "poetic" and "non-poetic" has no signifi-

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

cance to a modern poet. This reminds us of Ezra Pound's statement about modern poetry that it should be "Objective – no slither; direct – no excessive use of adjectives, no metaphors that won't permit examination... straight as the Greek." (Linda 66)

In "A Wild Lament", the poet has very artistically avoided cheap and ugly pornography because he has to evoke loathing for the heinous act of rape and also killings of all forms. The poet's involvement in the making of the poem is to act as an omniscient narrator. Some one hundred years ago, that is in 1906, Yeats wrote about modern poetry that it has to be an integrated poetry as 'blood, imagination, intellect, running together.' Shauq practices what he advocates in his critical essays. Shauq's small poem about the occurrence of a poem is pertinent here.

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شاعری

ٹھوٗر.....دوٚن سٕر نٕین نارن منز باگ

یَتھ پٮٹھ

یٕپأرٕ مہ تہ ہٕپأرٕ مہِ نارٕ کٕ پُش تہ جنیات

مُنزٕ مُنزٕ کھسان

اکھ اُ کِس کُن وُنگان

زَنہہ نہ اکھ اُ کس ہتٕ چونٹھ تہ رلاوان

نہ یَونے کران

صرف وُنگان

تہ پتہ واپس پننس پننس جنگلس منز شٕر پان

تہ ٹھور

تیٚتھے وأناکھ.....تیٚتھے وودأسٕ

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

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شاعری

ٹھوٗر.....دون سرٕ نیٖن نارن منز باگ

یَتھ پیٹھ

یپأرٕی مہ تہ ہپأرٕی مہِ نارٕ کی پُش تہ جنیات

مُنزی مُنزی کھسان

اکھ اُکس کُن وُنگان

زَنہہ نہ اکھ اُکس ہتی چونٹھ تہ رلاوان

نہ یوَنے کران

صرف وُنگان

تہ پتہ واپس پننس پننس جنگلس منز شرٕ پان

تہ ٹھور

تیٖتھے وأناکھ.....تیٖتھے وودأسی

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

Poetry

At the top of the hillock between
two deep and dark ravines,
there assemble in night-time
all the phantoms and brutes
of each of the two ravines.

they howl in their peculiar voices
unintelligible to each other;

never do they touch each other's snouts,
nor do they ever interbreed,
but keep howling till they desire,
then disperse and disappear
in their unseen grottos in the two ravines,
leaving behind
the hillock
empty and stark.

(Tr. Shauq)

Occurrence of a poem is shown as an interface of various languages. They very act of it its occurrence is all that matters, not any defined meaning. This critical notion about poetry is visualized against a derationalized setting, a hillock between two deep ravines. The phantoms and brutes that assemble at the hilltop howl at each other without caring to make each other understand what they mean. They enjoy hearing the undecipherable noise and depart. There is neither any physical intimacy nor any procreative act. The meeting takes place in nightly hours which makes recognition impossible. There is no prescribed duration of meeting. They keep howling according to their wishes. Finally they disperse and disappear in the dark ravines. The hilltop remains empty and deserted till they meet again.

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The extended image signifies the fundamental notion of modern poetry that an effective communication is not possible in poetry. Poetry does not aim at adding to the well-defined and ordered meanings existing already. It rather represents disorder itself which is the ultimate aim of poetry. Though situated in the present social and cultural condition of present Kashmir, Shauq's poetry is without a social purpose. His poetry does not seek refuge in any collective illusion, nor does it tend to create a new illusion of reality. It is rather celebration of creativity itself.

The end of social or political purpose of poetry is expressed in many of his couplets and poems. His poem Zabaan ("Language") is an illustration of this "aimless" creative act.

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Language

A substance, so malleable, so pliable,
in misuse is its use;
a harlot, now with you and then with me.
whatever suits you, have a name.
You argue! you hack and scythe!
I call you a terrorist, avowed,
and incorrigible dissenter!
nowhere shall you find
ground to stand.

A fleecy thick quilt:
wear it overhead: dread, fears, ennui, and gloom.
remove it to swell and swank.

An anvil available to use;
take the well-seasoned hide and sew your meanings;
you have the stock to sell.

The cuckoo coos and coos,
a suppressed wordless yell, an unuttered whine;
stirs an unsung song.

Vain are the heights and lofts;
a scrap dances up with a whirl of wind, a chance;
fall and decay is the rule.

(Tr. Shauq)

The poem quoted above, unlike Shauq's other poems, is not based on any particular incident. It is a series of poetic metaphors about language itself. The poet tries to understand the mystique of linguistic communication in a poetic way. He makes poetry responsible for all kinds of human behaviour and attitudes. Without being emotional about this legacy of human civilization, the poet reveals how language exists in society. It exists not in the form of

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prescribed rules of usage, nor in the form of written texts. Language "occurs" in the form of various human acts. In the first three lines, the poet makes a direct comment on language that it is pre-linguistic form is a formless substance. It takes a form and is called a language. The notion that language is form not substance, though borrowed from Ferdinand de Saussure, is expressed in inverse way that the user of language has an illusion that it is his own language; Shauq calls it "harlot" who cannot be appropriated. It is always the misuse of language that is its real purpose. Language helps us to give names to things.

The poem then gives a few illustrations of the "misuses" of language. It is used as a means of intolerance and discord. When one does not agree with someone's argument or belief, he is called an avowed terrorist. One unidentified speaker in the poem tells an impersonal listener that the label of "terrorist" shall make him houseless and excommunicated.

Language is then called a thick fleecy quilt which, in moments of introspection and musing, gives us pain, anxiety and depression. When it is not worn, or we can say, language is not used seriously, we can show off and revel.

Language is then called an anvil on which we can give new shapes to an old well-seasoned hide. The new shapes of the hide are our new meanings which become outworn within no time. But in a society it is these outworn meanings that are sold in different social interactions like politics, philosophy, and faith.

In respect poetry or other creative uses of language, language is nothing but incessant cooing. Formless experience is ineffable, and thus Shauq believes it is in its very act of "singing an unsung song", a groping in the dark that becomes poetry. But the primeval song still remains "unsung".

In the last three lines, language is visualized as a random dance of a bit of trash that dances with the movement of wind. When noth-

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ing is ultimate and abiding, all claims of attaining heights are futile: "fall and decay is the rule".

Many other poems of Shauq are about poetry itself. Being essentially a non-conformist, he plays with the critical notions about poetry. The visual presentation of activities on a runway is imagined as the process of creativity.

رنوے

تاوٕ ٹُس رنوے لیس پنٹھ

وُہو ہواوٕ واران ہُندو پھوار

یوگہٕ ژُکھرِ زپر

ہنہٕ ہنہٕ سوٗرے آبس تل

رنوے لیس کھٕرٕ ہل

سوٗدرٕ ژُکر سرونگ

لہنٕ، شیفہلنٕ لدٕ لکھوٗنٕ پُش

رنگ، نہ کانہہ ر پھ نہ کانہہ رشتہ بناوان

یوان

نیران

سیل بندو کھچہ بٕرتھ، پروجیکٹ، اگریمنٹ،

بلوٗپرنٹ، سی وی.....

ژکہٕ روس نب-کانیومٹ کیوٗر

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قے کران تہٕ

نیگلاوان

پتھ کُن فقط

کھیہٕ لد پایہٕ گُلس پیٹھ بُلبل جوٗرٕ

پُلسہٕ بارکہ ہندس وجاہٕ پشس پیٹھ ربوٗدٕ کوتر

کنڈٕ تارٕ تر ودٕ زٕھرٕ بوتلہٕ

ولنہٕ آمژ بے باش از آنی زبانہٕ ہنز ہو ہرائے

ماجہٕ زیوٗ ہندیوٗ رواجو، اندیشو، فکروتہٕ شورٕ نشہٕ

نجات

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Tr.

Hot layers of air constantly flutter
on the hot long runway.
A stir
in forgotten moments,
the whole airstrip
is submerged.

The surface of the runway is covered
with fish-smelling algal profusion,
mucous-skinned sneaky inmates
proliferate in the cavern of the bottom;
all without a known colour or form,
interbreed and thrive.

They come and go,
locked luggages are stuffed
with projects, agreements, CVs, blue-prints and undergarments;
the endless sky: a well run dry,
ingests all and regurgitates all.

Nothing abides, but a pair of bulbuls,
perched on the top of the rusted pipe,
gloomy pigeons on the desolate rusted roof
of the police barrack,
emptied bottles hung up on the barbed wire.

An unremitting din
of some wordless speech
circumscribes all,
frees all from the customs,
worries, anxieties and noise of the mother tongue.

(Tr. Shauq)

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

The events in the poem have the setting of a busy airstrip. Instead of factual details the poem begins with the feelings of a solitary individual surrounded by the hustle and bustle of passengers coming and going to various unnamed destinations. The onlooker, perhaps himself a bored passenger, watches the arid airstrip. Nothing attracts his attention but the flutter of layers of hot air.

In the next few lines, the whole scene changes into a fathomless ocean. The description of the cavernous bottom, replete with "mucous-skinned" animates of different aquatic species which interbreed and proliferate.

In the third part of the poem we are back to the initial setting. Innumerable passengers of different nationalities and languages come and go. Then there are numerous luggages filled with a variety of articles like blue prints, agreements, CV's etc. that suggest the routine business of the complex life. But the onlooker looks back to his subjective world and feels as if the sky is an old well that has run dry. The sky swallows and vomits people. The image suggests the onlooker's nausea.

In the fourth part, the onlooker avoids his dejection and focuses his sight on a pair of bulbuls that are sitting on the top of a rusted pipe. He also sees pigeons on the roof of the police barrack. The roof also looks desolate.

In the last part, we have a direct reference to the central theme. The poet suggests that when one is surrounded by many languages that are not intelligible, there is no social interaction. In such a condition, mother tongue also ceases to be in use because all the cares, apprehensions, hopes and fears are generated through native language of the speaker. It is the interplay of numerous texts that constitutes our thought process. Once we are away from the actual exigencies of routine life and surrounded by strangers, we are liberated from all concerns that are not related to the immediate reality.

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An unremitting din
of some wordless speech
circumscribes all,
frees all from the customs,
worries, anxieties and noise of the mother tongue.

Shauq, perhaps influenced by Roland Barthes, believes that it is the interplay of numerous texts, not belonging to a poet that constitutes a new use of language, including a poem. Barthes writes:

> ... a text is made up of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as hitherto said the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination. Yet this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader is without history, psychology; he is simply that someone who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted. (148)

Poet's role in the process of transformation in society, according to Shauq, is nothing but watching and representing it. He believes that modern poet can no more create any mahakaviya or grand poetry that could give direction to social changes or add to its dynamism. A poet in the feudal ages was not only a professional entertainer but also a spiritual guru. Modern society under the sway of cyber revolution and technological innovations has marginalized poets. However, it is the very process of poetic creativity that is the purpose of poetry. In one of his poems titled Katchh ("Weeds) he portrays a poet as fatigued and defeated warrior who is aghast to see modern society around him. He does not call it perverse or morbid, but on the contrary watches it with interest. There is no concept or hope of a redeemer to come to set things right. He, at the same time, is painfully nostalgic about the tradition and the origin. Here is the text of the original poem in Kashmiri.

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کچھ

کچھ لچھِ نوو

ہوَل تہٕ دستار ہٕژ روٚن

تلوارِ وٚلِتھ ہیوٚتُن شاندتہٕ شوٚنگ نا گنہِ بٔٹھس پٔٹھ

خلوت خانن، بُٹیکن، پارلرن تہٕ کلبن منز

لوٚگ متھٕ وانیُت

بانٛدٕ وانن ہنٛز دوسہٕ ویٚسر یہٕ

ژھٕرے سٹیلٹیفر انیوس[1] چھے سوٚ دٕر

بٔٹھس پٔٹھ ڈولان

-تھ وورسس منز

ژٕے زَن أچھ پھوران

مے زَن اتھٕ وٚتھ وٚتھ گژھان

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ڈیکہٕ گیٖنہٕ تہٕ ٹُجہٕ مُنٛز

ڈِنتٕ زَنوان دِوان

اکھ ڈآن مارنس لچھ سورگ

بُرزِ ہامٕ شیلہٕ منز پھُستھ دوشن ہُند اثر

میانہٕ تیمہٕ پشہٕ پیٹھ لاس ویگاس اکھ وٹھ دوٗر

کچھ باغٕگ لچھِ نوو

ہُژٕ تھکان، ٹونگر مونڈان

دتر، سوے، ٹھُلہٕ پر، گُرٕ سوزل، ژرِلژھج تہٕ ہامہٕ

نوان پھبان جہار کران

ڈوٗرِیٖن ہنز آوِج زآوِج پوشہٕ نہاکٕ

تہٕ آنگنٛگ فرمایشی درمُن

چھِر کاوس پراران

(3 جولائے، 2006ء)

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Tr.

Weeds

He swathed his sword
in his turban cloth
and waist-girdle
put off,
made a head cushion,
was soon in deep slumber
at the bank of the lake.

There in parlours, boutiques and clubs
thrives the trade of passions.
The walls of the prisons
cave in.
The empty ark lies
rotting in the sun
at the desolate shore.

Here in this fête
your eyes twitch,
my hands defy restraint.
The forehead wrinkles,
the eye-pupils portend
presence of witches!
Slaying one witch wins
ten thousand paradises.

The sighs soaked up
in the stones of Burzahama
have their impact,
perhaps.
Los Vegas one leap far
from my terrace.

Weeds in the garden

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

numerous are their names.
The wrists are wearied,
the hoes blunted;
jimson weed, nettle, sun spurge, cocklebur, barnyard grass... grow,
proliferate, and thrive.
The lanky and lean seedling
of desired flowers
and silky home turf
thirst for a spray.

(Tr. Shauq)

The poem, in the form of free prose, is an assemblage of images at the surface. In the first stanza, we see the exasperated "reformer" accepting defeat. He wraps his sword, suggesting an effective weapon of fighting evil, with the cloth of his turban. He chooses a spot for rest near a under the shade of a tree near a lake.

In the second stanza, we have a picture of an urban life where all are busy in enjoying themselves. There is flesh trade going on and all the "evils" thrive unhampered. The falling of the prison walls suggests that there is no more any restraint. The feeling of impunity makes all nonchalant about the old values. The "ark" alludes to Noah's Ark which saved all humans and animals from the great deluge. In contemporary reality the deluge is in the form of all swaying marketing that makes everything saleable. Profit is the principal concern.

Reference to the sighs absorbed in the boulders at Burzahama (the oldest archaeologist site in Kashmir) takes our attention to original natives of Kashmir. Modern Kashmiri society has drifted away from the millennia-old culture. Los Vegas, known for perversity, is "one leap far /from my terrace." It means that Kashmiri society, too, is fast moving towards a "free" society.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

There are people who advocate force and killing to strike terror to redeem society. They hate women as they attribute all evils in society to them. They call them "witches".

The forehead wrinkles,
the eye-pupils portend
presence of witches!
Slaying one witch wins
ten thousand paradises.

In the concluding stanza, the weeds with numerous names suggest multifarious evils. The weeds proliferate in the garden without any attention, while the seedlings of choice flowers shrivel, waiting for the gardener's spray. All attempts to save the flowers and "silky turf" from the onslaught of weeds are doomed to fail.

Most of Shauq's poems are about his loneliness. His loneliness is different from the common theme of loneliness. It is about his individual choice to remain away from the mob. He is not despondent about his isolation, he rather celebrates it. His intellectual distance from the people of routine faith, customs, habits, and socially acceptable attitudes and approaches to various issues of life is expressed in many of his poems like Tuhy ti Bi ("You and I"), Maagun ("The Impresario"), Dwakhi lad Maskhari ("A Woeful Jester"), Mohnyuv yi Yoon bi ("This Man of Mine, Me"), Band Makaanan Manz Roozan Vaalyan Kun ("A Call to the Housed") and many more. Here is the text of the poem Band Makaanan Manz Roozan Vaalyan Kun ("A Call to the Housed").

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بند مکانن منز روزن والیٚن گن

ہے پوشہِ وُنس ژِرِس نہٕ ژھید نِس تل روزن والیو
مہ اُسو تیمس نِس چھنٚس بے چھپر آوارس پٹھ

یہ پناہ روس چھنہٕ زانان کانہہ بنہٕ
زوٚنہِ تارکن تہٕ آفتابس منز
ٹھُندی نامکمل مکانہٕ
آو سیمتِس بوسید نبس تل
ژلونس سمیس بتی ہنہِ ہنہِ چھلہِ چھلہِ وُکر پیٚوان

اُکر سُندگر چھُ ژُنجہِ دوران
ژھوپہ دم کرتھ سفید شینہٕ وُلتھ سنگر وندکر وندکر
کھِر ژلونس نیلس جنڈس پتہ پتہ

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چھٹہ پونپر چھنہٕ اَمس گٔنہٕ زاٚنٛ متہٕ سوٚنٛچ زنوان

تم چھِ اَمی ہنزن بے سوٚکھ اَچھن منزو پھوار

ہوٚکھیٚن آرن ہنزو کنیو پیٚٹھ کی

یمن دوہٕ نوٚد تا پھ ناوان

گنڈ ونجس پیٚٹھ آبہٕ نوٚٹ

تریشہٕ ہتیٚن راہرون کیٚتھ

اَمی سُند مقدس آستان

بےٚ بوٚنی چھِ تُہندی تم سوٚتری سونہٕ میٚرٕ ہندی کھہٕ

بےانہار بتھی گٔرتھ حورن تہٕ غلمانن ہندیٚن وُٹھن پیٚٹھ

مُرتھ وُٹھ گُمجار

بےٚ مال اَچھن برونٹھ کنہٕ چاری پاتھر

اَمی ہندی مژرتہٕ اِرسر

بے گوڈتہٕ بےٚ اندو تن پیٚٹھ ہلی پدی

گٔنہٕ فرہنگس نہٕ تابین

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ہے پوشہٕ وٚنس وٚرِس نہٕ ژھیدٕنس تٕل روزن والیو
مہ اَسو تیمس ننس چھنٕنس بے چھپر آوارس پٕٹھ

A Call to the Housed

O you, dwelling under solid roofs
beneath the abiding dome of the sky!
Do not laugh at this bareheaded,
shelter less vagrant.

The houseless tramp,
knowing no lines, discerns
in the sun and the moon
your never-finished houses
erected under the putrid dome
of the firmament
crumbling with time.

His horses, galloping
silently
after a fast moving blue flag
over snowy horizons
know no bounds.
The motley butterflies,
auguring no predicted spring
fluttering in his eyes,
relentlessly soar
over the shingles of the ravines
washed by showers
and sunlight.

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The water-pitcher placed
on a wooden stand
under an aged elm
is the most sacred shrine
for the wayfarers.

Unproductive are your level fields
made of gold.
With painted smiles
on their unchanging complexion
yours houris and incognitos
make a trite farce
before desire-less eyes.

His incongruities
his wayward travelling
on paths without beginning,
without destination and direction
are not servile to any lexicon.

O you, dwelling under solid roofs
beneath the abiding dome of the sky!
Do not laugh at this bareheaded,
shelter-less vagrant.

(Tr. Shauq)

The very beginning lines of the poem are a satire to those who feel safe within the framework of faith in destiny. The poet makes a pejorative remark on the sky which people believe to be their solid and abiding shelter. The speaker, being in a mocking mood tells them not to laugh at the houseless. The houselessness of the vagrant intimates his scepticism.

In the second stanza, the speaker is quite blunt in saying that their shelter is "putrid" and as such caving in with the passage of time. The vagrant, on the other hand has no such premonitions. He is free.

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The speaker celebrates his freedom from the frameworks of faith. He is constantly following an image of freedom that has no defined and absolute definition. His freedom is following the mirage of freedom. The image of a horse racing after a blue flag over snowy horizons suggests that real freedom lies in the very quest for freedom.

The water pitcher placed on a wooden stand for the thirsty wayfarers is the speaker's most hallowed shrine. The image suggests that it is practical good humanism that is the perfect 'religion'. There is, however, no mention of religion but the phrase "sacred shrine" has a religious connotation. Water pitchers on wooden stands are commonly observed along the paths through deserts and jungles.

Shauq draws upon his imagery and concepts from all sources: rural and urban life, advertising, films, books, journals, myths, legends and personal memories. The traditional difference between "poetic" and "non-poetic" has no significance for him. He consciously constructs his poem according to the need of the subject and the import. It is this heterogeneity of components of the text of his poem that makes it generally ambiguous for a common reader. But the fact is that all his poems are about common man's day-to-day experiences. Shauq, as author of the text, is not accessible there. A characteristic feature of all his poems is that he never uses first person singular. Even when he has to say something about himself, he presents himself as a character engaged in a dramatic situation. He erects a stage in which the poet himself performs but as a character. He makes it certain that the actions of his character establish a chosen attitude towards the subject of the poem. Here is one of his very personal poems, titled "504 on the List".

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لِسٹس منز 504

یہ، یہ اکھ کُس گوو، 504

قد: فٹہٕ پانزٕھ، موٚٹ، سینہٕ کھوٚل تہٕ

بُتھس نہٕ وال تہٕ

بدمعاش تنگہٕ تال، ہنگن پیٹھ وآ نکی پھُنگی، تہٕ نظر رآوِمژ

ژ تجہن ستی جنگ کران تہٕ توتہٕ

سٹون واش قنیضہٕ تٕل پان کھٹان

بُتھس پیٹھ شٹھیو مُت اُسن!

سُتہٕ از بیلہٕ سآری پیتر رنجید چھِ!

یہٕ چھُ ہر بارِ منزی سڑکن پھیران آسان

پننہٕ گرسیہٕ ہُندتہٕ نہٕ خیال!

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جُمن چھُ کِتہِ پھِرِ وُچھمُت
دُکانہٕ پیٹھ چوراسیہٕ سنز کیا ہتام "مُکتی" ژھاران
تہٕ پتہٕ "دَسن" پیٹھ نیران
مےٚ چھُ پانہٕ کِتہِ پھِرِ وُچھمُت
گرلز کالج کِس گیٹس کُن مُدے گنڈتھ رٕہتھ گوٚمُت

دپان انگریزٕ چھُ زانان، مگر کتھ تہٕ چھُنہٕ ہینکان کُرتھ
دپوس زَن کینٕہ ھاہ وَن
اَمٕ ہندٕ ہمسایہٕ ونان: صرف چھُ پران آسان
بٕیٚن اپار ٹمنٹن ہنزن زنٕین کُن زانہٕ نہٕ اُچھ تہٕ تُلنہٕ
شرم چھَس نہٕ یوان، دپان گرِ چھُ کچنس منز
آشنہٕ کامہٕ منز اتھ رٔوٹ تہٕ کران!

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ازِ بیلہِ نہ پچھ شکیچ کانہہ تہِ باتھ روٗز

تہِ خواب چھِ پزنس تیار

اُمس چھُنہِ بتھس پیٹھ کانہہ تہِ اثراہ نوٗن

شکیے کتھ چھُ تھاوٗن.....بلکہ!

دِیوٗس ''ٹِک''

13 نومبر، 1993ء

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Tr.

504 On the List

Who is this 504 on the List?
The 5-feet lumpy with a broad chest, shaven face,
a lecherously bald head, thickened hair at the temples,
a bewildered looks;
grappling with his forties,
hidden under his stone-wash shirt,
wearing a fossilized smile
on his face
even in the days of solemn concern.
He loiters lonely in crowded streets and returns home
late in the evening.
Obsequious even to us, unmindful of his chair.
Nika has seen him
buying Pt. Chaurasia's Mukti and the magazine The Sun;
I myself detected him
gazing at the main gate of the Girls' College.
They say he knows English, but falters
whenever he is asked to say his views.
His neighbours say he reads a lot,
and shies when ladies of the apartment talk to him.
He is not ashamed of helping his wife in the kitchen.

Today, when all the doubts are gone,
and the dream is to come true,
his face is expressionless as usual.

Why to leave
anything for probability?
Tick off his name!

(Tr. Shauq)

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The poem is in the form of an inquisition by a character about some other character, who is the focus of attention. The poem was written when militant politics was at its climax in Kashmir. The internal evidence suggests that the investigator is a leader of some group of militants. It was the time when the intellectuals, poets and free thinkers were the target of militancy. The person in focus is described by his height, habits, clothing, reading preferences, love for music and his inclinations. All these references unambiguously bring to the surface a portrait of the author of the poem. He is not known as a personality but as "504 on the List". The insurgents on a killing spree do not leave anything for doubt and therefore decide to liquidate him. The poem is thus a chilling reflection of Kashmiri society in the nineties of the 20th century.

To conclude, Shauq's poetry is an apocalyptic kind of poetry in which a historical period marked by upheavals and crises, chaos, disorder, and incongruities is presented without any poetic decorum. There is place for ideas and ideals.

His poetry, both in the genre of the short poem and ghazal, is sharp departure from the poetic practices popular among his senior as well as junior contemporaries. On the one hand it is rooted in the tradition and present condition of Kashmiri people; on the other hand, it is sensitive to the changes in theory and practice of poetry at the global level. He is not happy with the poetic temperament of his times and criticizes it vehemently in his articles. Though he has not many followers, but it has given a new direction to modern Kashmiri poetry.

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Chapter VI

Conclusion

The premise of this book is that literature in a language flourishes when it remains in contact with the literatures of other languages. Keeping this basic principle in mind, an attempt has been made to see how literature available in Kashmiri in modern times got influenced by English literature. The choice of three poets of the post-independence Kashmiri poetry, Dinanath Nadim, Rahman Rahi and Shafi Shauq is made due to the fact that their poetry adequately represents the three distinct modes in the development of Kashmiri poetry: Imagism, Symbolism and Modernism. This never means that there are no other modes of writing and the three poets under study are the best poets among a host of contemporary Kashmiri poets. In fact numerous Kashmiri poets have achieved remarkable recognition during the last sixty years and their contribution to Kashmiri poetry is unforgettable. The scope of the present study does not allow the discussion of the talent of all the individual poets and find out relative influence of English literature on each of them. The present study therefore chose only three modes of writing: Imagism, Symbolism and Modernism which are adequately represented by the three eminent poets in the language whose contribution to the post-independence Kashmiri poetry is remarkable and is sure to have impact on the future literature in

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the language. The rationale of choosing the three poets is also the fact that all the three have studied English literature and have been influenced by English poetry as well as English criticism.

Chapter I is a comprehensive introduction to the land and people of Kashmir, their speech called Kashmiri and the rich cultural heritage of the community. Among other things, a part of the study is made to see how Kashmiri literature with its strong native traditions, got influenced by the literature of other speech communities which, under various socio-political conditions, came into contact with Kashmiri people. Kashmiri people have a unique identity that has a history spread over several millennia. They have their unique language, different from all the South-East Asian languages, which has descended from some unknown native language. The language is remarkably different from the Indo-Aryan languages, as well as the Iranian languages. Its phonology, morphology and syntax are much different from that of its neighbouring languages. The strength of the identity of Kashmiri people also lies in its folklore, customs and rituals. However, while retaining its unique identity, Kashmiri identity has accepted the influence of all those languages, cultures and faiths that have developed an intimate contact with it. It is interesting to note that the Valley has been ruled by many other peoples: Greeks, Mongolians, Turks, Iranians, Afghanis, Sikhs, English and Dogras. People of all these countries have left an indelible mark on Kashmiri identity. Kashmiri culture is composite in nature in which Buddhists, Hindus, Shaivite, Muslims, and Sikhs are inalienably integrated. While assimilating diverse influences, Kashmiri culture is in accord with the unique ecological and geographical conditions of the Himalayan valley. All this diversity in unity has been adequately represented by the Shaivite and Sufi poets of Kashmir. Spread over about six hundred years, the mystic and devotional poetry in the language has adapted many of the great works of both India and Iran. The numerous works either translated or adapted, are now a part of the glorious literary tradition in Kashmiri. During all the six

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hundred years of expansion and experimentation, Kashmiri language produced many romantic poets who sang of man's earthly love and beauty of nature; Habba Khatoon, Mahmood Gami, Rasool Mir, Ahmad Batwari are some of the most popular poets in this group. The traditions of mystic and romantic poetry ran parallel. At many places it is not easy to distinguish between the two because poets use the expression of human love as a vehicle for mystic love, and mystic meanings in human love. The first chapter included and analyzed only a few poems of this long literary era as illustrations. It has been also discussed to some extent that how by the beginning of the twentieth century Mehjoor and Azad deviated from the common mystic and love poetry and initiated writing on themes of social realism and revolution. Attempt has been made to show how the two poets are the real founders of modern poetry.

In chapter II, a historical view of how English language of Britain reached Kashmir and how various English scholars worked in close collaboration with local scholars and studied various aspects of Kashmiri language and its literature is given. The contact with English resulted in introduction of many new genres of literature such as the short poem, the sonnet, the opera, the novel and the short story into Kashmiri. These genres have now become permanent features of contemporary Kashmiri literature. Popularity of English language in the state of Jammu and Kashmir plays a vital role in the development of contemporary Kashmiri literature. The creative writers of the land cannot remain aloof from what is going on in World literatures produced in English. Since literature of a language gets transformed by the changes in culture under various economic and intellectual conditions, Kashmiri literature has to look forward to the changes in English literature that itself is constantly changing under the same economic and intellectual atmosphere. However, Kashmiri poets and fiction writers are deeply conscious of their identity. While accepting and assimilating impacts from foreign literatures, like English, they preserve their native traditions

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and forms of writing. In poetry, for instance, poetic forms like the ghazal, vatsun, vaakh, rubaai, and na't and leela survive and bulk of contemporary poetry is being produced in these indigenous forms. Talented poets in the language constantly experiment in the local forms of poetry to make it representative of Kashmiri sensibility as well as the changing times.

Though Kashmiri literature retains its strong cultural basis, it cannot grow unless it is open to positivism in the literatures in other languages, particularly English. The network of literary and cultural relationships between Indian people and the people of the West is now an established literary aesthetics and has to be explored further under the discipline of comparative literature. Perhaps, as a result, a new aesthetics might come into being.

Imagism as an aesthetic movement in the West has had its immediate impact on contemporary Kashmiri literature; there is a bulk of Kashmiri poetry that can be called as Imagist poetry. Imagism as a movement in European and American poetry was established by Ezra Pound and a group of writers in 1912 in London. It laid emphasis on exclusion of unnecessary details and concentration of the visual content. The Imagists advocated a sort of sculptural objectivity and immaculate craftsmanship. They abhorred lyricism and exuberance of words. They desired that poetry should bring into speech the qualities of painting and sculpture.

Dinanath Nadim, who consciously tried to follow the technique of Imagism of the West, emerged as the most outstanding Imagist Kashmiri poet. In Chapter III after a considerable discussion of the salient features of Nadim's poetry has been examined with special reference to imagism in some of his most celebrated poems. Analysis of these poems has been attempted to show how Dinanath Nadim, while retaining his organic relation with the native poetic values, enriched Kashmiri poetry by assimilating into it the concepts of Imagism of the West. Nadim's venture had been nothing less than

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a revolution in present-day Kashmiri poetry. His influence on his contemporaries like Ali Mohammad Lone, Zinda Kaul, Samad Mir and Ahad Zargar and his followers like Rahman Rahi, Amin Kamil, G.N.Firaq, Santosh and Zutsi has been leading to enriching effects. Braj B. Kachru writes about Nadim's style:

> His [Nadim's] technique is simple: he seems to use words rather as clever children use marbles, with intriguing combinations and creative effects in a seemingly effortless display of craftsmanship. One is left wondering, why could not I think of that? Not many of Nadim's contemporaries could think of comparable devices... (71)

Rahman Rahi, a versatile poet, on the other hand, had chosen the technique of Symbolism that had emerged as a major poetic movement in France in the second half of the 19th century and found immediate acceptance by the poets writing in English. Chapter IV deals with how Rahman Rahi, in spite of his vital relation with the mystic and romantic Kashmiri poets of the last six hundred years, embraced the symbolist technique and produced great poetry that is sure to remain a standard model for the poets of the coming generations. The fundamental characteristic feature of Rahman Rahi's poetry is his notion of creative use of diction. A thorough analysis has been done to prove how Rahmaan Rahi liberates words from the dullness of common usage. By forging unexpected combinations of words the poet revitalises them and renders symbolist dimensions. His poems give testimony to the principle that only the creative use of ambiguity enables poetry to have a lasting effect. The true merit of poetry lies in the poet, genius to evoke or suggest. In this direction, Rahi has availed himself of his acquaintance with the Symbolist poetry in English. Analyses of some of his poems in the chapter emphasize the fact.

Chapter V has been devoted to Shafi Shauq's Modernism. It pinpoints how modernism, and subsequently postmodernism had their direct influence on contemporary Kashmiri poetry and the way

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Shafi Shauq emerged as its chief representative. The chapter establishes the fact that Shafi Shauq consciously had chosen to write under the influence of English poetry when he started his poetic career by translating some famous English poets. With his nonconformist ideas and knowledge of the contemporary experiential world, he could not follow any native poetic tradition and therefore, sought models in modern and post-modern English poetry. He follows the poetic principles and techniques of both these schools according to the demand of the subject and theme. He creates poetry by relying on physical presence of things of immediate experience and creates order out of the very disorder that he accepts as the essence of human existence. Analyses of some of his poems have been aimed at revealing how his method of representation is true to the joys and sorrows, and the tragic predicament of his people. He consciously avoids use of embellished language and tries to capture a chosen situation along with its inherent dramatic potential. The text is brought to the reader through concrete visual representation. He accepts intertextuality as the soul of poetry and believes that no poetry can exist in isolation. Attempt has been made to show how his poems are the apt examples of welding together other texts and notions of other disciplines into one structural unity. The text of his poems is essential to the land, its people and their culture. It draws inspiration from both ancient and contemporary life of other lands and other languages.

An analysis of Shafi Shauq's poems on a variety of themes is aimed at revealing how the poet consciously and rigorously tries to avoid superficial sentimentalism and statement about the chosen subject. Even if he means to give expression to his very personal experience, it is through a dramatic situation in which other characters are engaged. His small poem "504 on the List" is an illustration of this technique.

Shafi Shauq's poetry is radically different from his senior as well as junior contemporaries. While other poets, including Dinanath

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Nadim and Rahman Rahi, compose poems in keeping with the demand of their readers and write popular lyrics for public, Shafi Shauq is very selective. He writes serious poetry only when he discovers an event, a situation or some object significant for writing. He, too, has written scripts and songs of many popular television serials and documentary films, but he does not consider it serious literature and as such does not publish them. His poetic practice is in agreement what he advocates through his essays in literary criticism. (Shafi Shauq published a large number of essays and books in literary criticism and his opinion is considered authentic.)

Understood in this way, the three major poets of modern times gave three new directions to Kashmiri poetry. It was possible only when they had a wide study of poetry and literature about poetry in other languages particularly English. It was again their knowledge of English that came under the influence of the theoretical background of three major literary movements in Europe: Imagism, Symbolism, and Modernism. Though they have been placed under different schools, but here in these concluding lines it is pertinent to mention that the division seems to be arbitrary. There are many poems of each of the three poets that transgress this categorization. And then there are many things common between their poetry. First, they took Kashmiri poetry out of the limited aesthetics of oral poetry so that the written text of poetry becomes an object of study and source of reflection or delight. This was a remarkable achievement in a developing language. Poetry based on oral memory in Kashmiri had a very long tradition spread over several centuries. Poets generally composed what was composed by other poets innumerable times. It was a poetry that was essentially meant for singing. It was based on "oral memory". David Wilson defines oral memory in these lines:

> The only method is to think memorable thoughts.... Oral memory is preserved in mnemonic formulas, is heavily rhythmic, full of balanced patterns, repetitions etc. Ev-

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> ery device you can think of to aid recollection is used. Proverbs are a classic example, and we're not talking here an occasional 'red sky at night shepherds' delight': these mnemonic formulas form the substance of memory itself. (Wilson 164)

Kashmiri poetry, too, up to the mid of the 20th century was based on traditional similes, metaphors, rhythms, and classical notions of rhetoric. Perfection in song writing was the ultimate value of poetry. But when Kashmiri society underwent a radical transformation after the end of feudalism, individual thought expressed in written texts became the hallmark of good poetry. It could not have been made possible without poets' knowledge of poetry and poetics in other languages. The three poets included in this book had a direct study of English literature. They did not imitate English poets, but acquired many techniques and ways of expression from them. It was through English that they had knowledge of the changing concepts of creativity like Imagism, Symbolism, Modernism and Post-Modernism. This is the rationale of choosing Dinanath Nadim, Rahman Rahi and Shafi Shauq for study in this book.

The hope of the researcher is that this attempt at understanding contemporary Kashmiri poetry with special reference to the influence of English poetry shall stimulate fresh inquiry in the field of comparative poetics.

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Glossary

Aazaad Nazm

An unrhymed poem that does not adhere to the metrical regularity of the traditional verse. An aazaad nazm is usually a short poem.

Ghazal

A lyric in couplets in any chosen meter. All the hemstitches rhyme alternately. The *ghazal* writers optionally repeat a word after the rhyme. One hemistich is called *a misr'a*.

Hyiymaal

A female character (princess) in a Kashmiri folktale – *Hyiymal and Naag Raaj.*

Laila

A female character (beloved of Majoon) in a Persian folktale – *Laila and Majnoon.*

Majnoon

A male character (lover of Laila) in a Persian folktale – *Laila and Majnoon.*

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Manqabat

A panegyric in honour of a religious leader or saint. The genre of poetry was borrowed from Persian poetry.

Mathnavi

A narrative or descriptive poem in rhyming couplets. The genre of poetry was borrowed from Persian poetry.

Naagraaj

An underworld character, the king of snake world, who married Hyiymal (princess), in a Kashmiri folktale – *Hyiymal and Naag Raaj.*

Na't

A lyrical eulogy in honour of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The genre of poetry was borrowed from Persian poetry.

Nazm

A poem of any length and in any form in which there is continuity of theme.

Qafiya

The rhyming sounds used in ghazals and other lyrics.

Qasidah

An eulogy in any form of verse as a tribute to a man of status. The genre of poetry was borrowed from Persian poetry.

Radief

The word repeated alternately at the end of the hemistich of a couplet. It can be a refrain also.

Razm

A long versified narrative of some historical or legendary war.

Ruba'i

An alternately rhyming quatrain in a meter prescribed for it. The genre of poetry was borrowed from Persian poetry.

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Saraapa

A traditional poem in which the poet's art is adjudged by his craft of describing a female body in every detail.

Shruk

An indigenous quatrain form used for devotional, sermonizing and mystic themes. Sheikh Noor-ud Din (a fifteenth century poet) is chiefly known for the shruks.

Vaakh

An indigenous quatrain form used for mystic experience. Lalla Dyad (a fourteenth century woman poet) is chiefly known for her vaakhs.

Vatsun

A highly refrained lyric in a variety of schemes of verse. The poets prefer internal rhymes in addition to the end-rhymes and refrains. A vatsun is essentially meant for singing.

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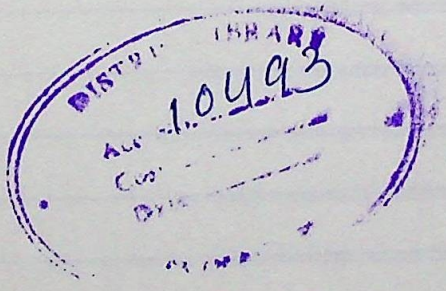

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Imprints of English on Modern KASHMIRI POETRY

This book traces the origin of Kashmiri Language and Literature in general and Modern Kashmiri Poetry in particular with Mahjoor & Azad as pioneers. They were later joined by a galaxy of poets like Nadim, Rahman Rahi, Kamil, Firaq, Shafi Shauq and others who displayed their creative potential and made this newly established poetic tradition more firm for hundreds of years.

The book mainly focuses on the influence of English literature on some of the major contemporary Kashmiri poets with special reference to Dinanath Nadim, Rahman Rahi and Shafi Shauq, both in terms of theme and style, so as to establish the distinctiveness of their contribution to the growth and development of modern Kashmiri poetry.